GREEK POPULAR RELIGION IN GREEK PHILOSOPHY

JON D. MIKALSON

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Preface

This book has its origins over forty years ago, in an undergraduate tutorial with Friedrich Solmsen at the University of Wisconsin. He assigned me first to read and write short papers on Plato's *Meno* and *Phaedo*. Our third and last reading was to be Plato's *Phaedrus*, and this time I suggested a paper topic—'Orphism in the *Phaedrus*'. Professor Solmsen laughed slightly (I now know why!) and said, 'Ah, but first you must read Linforth's *Arts of Orpheus*.' Such was my introduction to Plato, to investigating religious topics in philosophical writings, and to source-criticism, for all of which I am much indebted to both Ivan Linforth and Friedrich Solmsen. Other projects have distracted me over the years, but in recent years I have found great pleasure in returning to the philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle, to see what they can contribute to my understanding of the religion practised by the Greeks. In this I have received invaluable help and encouragement from Robert Parker, Andrew S. Mason, and my colleague Daniel Devereux. I have credited them in notes for some specific points, but throughout their comments led me to revise or sharpen several discussions and arguments. They do not, certainly, agree with all my conclusions, but where I have been wise enough to accept their advice, I have benefited greatly. I thank, too, the staff at Oxford University Press, especially Hilary O'Shea who offered welcome support and encouragement.

J.D.M.

Crozet, Virginia
April 2009

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ἀλλ' εἴτε τοὺς θεοὺς ἵλεως εἶναί σοι βούλει,
θεραπευτέον τοὺς θεούς.

Socrates, in Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.1.28

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Contents

Abbreviations x

Introduction 1
1. 'Service to the Gods' 29
2. Prayer, Sacrifice, Festivals, Dedications, and Priests in 'Service to the Gods' 43
3. Divination and Its Range of Influence 110
4. 'Proper Respect for the Gods' and 'Religious Correctness' 140
5. 'Religious Correctness' and Justice 187
6. Philosophers and the Benevolence of the Greek Gods 208
Appendix: Polling the Greeks and Their Philosophers 242

References 252
Index of passages cited 263
General index 284

Abbreviations

For ancient authors and their texts I use the abbreviations in S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn. (1996), with a few alterations. The abbreviations of the titles of works of Plato are so frequent that I list them here. Those in square brackets are of uncertain or unlikely attribution to Plato.[1]

[*Alc.*]	[*Alcibiades*]
[*Amat.*]	[*Amatores*]
Ap.	*Apology*
Chrm.	*Charmides*
[*Clit.*]	[*Clitophon*]
Cra.	*Cratylus*
Cri.	*Crito*
Criti.	*Critias*
[*Def.*]	[*Definitions*]
Ep.	*Epistulae*
[*Epi.*]	[*Epinomis*]
Euthd.	*Euthydemus*
Euthphr.	*Euthphyro*
Grg.	*Gorgias*
[*Hipparch.*]	[*Hipparchus*]
[*Hp.Ma.*]	[*Hippias Major*]
[*Hp.Mi.*]	[*Hippias Minor*]
La.	*Laches*
Lg.	*Leges*, *Laws*
Ly.	*Lysis*
Men.	*Meno*
Menex.	*Menexenus*
[*Min.*]	[*Minos*]

[1] For these works see p. 3 n. 4.

Phd.	*Phaedo*
Phdr.	*Phaedrus*
Phlb.	*Philebus*
Plt.	*Politicus*
Prm.	*Parmenides*
Prt.	*Protagoras*
Rep.	*Republic*
Smp.	*Symposium*
Sph.	*Sophist*
[*Thg.*]	[*Theages*]
Tht.	*Theaetetus*
Ti.	*Timaeus*

The abbreviations of journal titles are those recommended in the *American Journal of Archaeology* 95 (1991), 1–16, also to be found at www.ajaonline.org under 'submissions'.

The following serve as abbreviations for books from which the fragments of the philosophers are cited.

[Auricchio]	F. L. Auricchio, *Ermarco: Frammenti* (Naples 1988).
[Döring]	K. Döring, *Die Megariker: Kommentierte Sammlung der Testimonien* (Amsterdam 1972).
[G]	G. Giannantoni, *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae* (Naples 1990).
[IP]	M. Isnardi-Parente, *Senocrate—Ermodoro: Frammenti* (Naples 1982).
[K]	J. F. Kindstrand, *Bion of Borysthenes* (Uppsala 1976).
[Mannebach]	E. Mannebach, *Aristippi et Cyrenaicorum Fragmenta* (Leiden 1961).
[O]	D. Obbink, *Philodemus: On Piety* (Oxford 1996).
[Pötscher]	W. Pötscher, *Theophrastus: Περὶ Εὐσεβείας* (Leiden 1964).
[Rose^3]	V. Rose, *Aristotelis Qui Ferebantur Librorum Fragmenta* (Leipzig 1886).
[Ross]	W. D. Ross, *Aristotelis Fragmenta Selecta* (Oxford 1955).
SVF	H. von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (Leipzig 1921–3).

[Theiler]	W. Theiler, *Poseidonios: Die Fragmente*, 2 vols. (Berlin 1982), i.
[Usener]	H. Usener, *Epicurea* (Leipzig 1887).
VS	H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Zürich 1964–6).
[W]	M. Winiarczyk, *Euhemeri Messenii Reliquiae* (Stuttgart 1991).
[Wehrli]	F. Wehrli, *Die Schule des Aristoteles* (Basle 1944–59).
[WI]	M. Winiarczyk, *Diagorae Melii et Theodori Cyrenaei Reliquiae* (Leipzig 1981).

Introduction

GREEK RELIGION IN GREEK PHILOSOPHY

In the *Republic* Socrates entrusts to Apollo of Delphi the founding of sanctuaries, sacrifices, and other cult 'services' to the gods, *daimones*, and heroes in his new city (4.427b1–c4). In the *Laws* Plato has his Athenian lawgiver arrange, often with Apollo's approval, a rich annual religious programme with daily sacrifices and festivals for a large number of deities in a variety of sanctuaries. Aristotle in the *Politics* would have sanctuaries for gods and heroes distributed throughout the land and would dedicate the income of one-quarter of the land of his ideal city to expenses related to the cult of the gods (7.1330a8–13 and 1331b17–18). These are but a few of many indications that Plato and Aristotle knew, understood, and had some sympathy with the practised religion of their time.

There is, I think, something more to be learned of ancient Greek practised religion from the descriptions, criticisms, and uses made of it by Plato, Aristotle, and other philosophers of the time in which it flourished. And, I think, a look at how philosophers describe and manipulate elements of practised religion will offer a new perspective on some of the philosophical writings themselves, shedding new light on some old problems and introducing some new ideas. By 'practised' or 'popular' religion I mean the religious beliefs and practices of the vast majority of Greeks of the time, or, to paraphrase Guthrie, the routine of religion which was accepted by most of the Greeks as a matter of course.[1] Previous studies of Greek religion in the

[1] Guthrie, 1950: 258. On this see Mikalson, 1983. Others would include under the term 'Greek religion' not only the beliefs and practices of what Nilsson terms the *Volksreligion* (1967: 784), but also virtually all claims about and descriptions of

philosophers by both religious historians and philosophers have tended to concentrate on the new theologies, the new concepts of god(s) developed by the ancient philosophers, and on the resulting philosophical criticisms of the mythological gods of Greek poetry. It has now for some time been fairly commonly agreed that these topics had little reference to or impact on the religion actually practised by Greeks of the time.[2] In this book I attempt to isolate and describe how theoretically inclined philosophers understood and interpreted major components and concepts of the popular religion of their time. These include cultic practices such as sacrifice, prayer, and divination and also the ideas of εὐσέβεια, ὁσιότης, humans' relationships to the gods, and the religious aspects of morality. All fall under the category, as we shall see, of 'service to the gods'. In distinction from most work in this area, my starting point and point of reference throughout is not philosophical theory but Greek practised religion. From this different, indeed opposite, vantage point, I hope to discover more about both the nature of practised Greek religion and how the individual philosophers, especially Plato, fitted elements of that religion into their own philosophical theories.[3] I offer one simple, concrete example of my approach, concerning one aspect of prayer. Xenophon in *Memorabilia* 1.3.2 gives this description of Socrates' usual practice:

the gods and their relationships to humans to be found in all the poetic and prose literature of the time. Thus Homer's Zeus, Plato's demiurge, and Xenocrates' *daimones* would all be part of the Greek religious experience. If one views the Greeks holistically and from the scholar's study, that might be a valid claim. If we wish, however, to understand the effect of religion on most individual Greeks in their daily life, we need, I think, to concentrate on practised religion, and that is my concern here. In this sense I study just that one aspect, but I think an important one, of ancient Greek religion as it is represented in the philosophical literature of its time.

[2] e.g. Herrmann, 2007: 385; Most, 2003: 308; Burkert, 1985: 305. For an attempt to see effects of philosophical rationalism in state cult, see Humphreys, 2004: 61–70. Note also Harrison, 2007: 382.

[3] Among the relatively few general studies of this subject, Babut (1974) is the most comprehensive and helpful. Particularly valuable is Babut's distinction between gods (and practices) of cult and those of poetry throughout the book. Most, 2003, is an excellent introduction to the whole subject area. Most valuable for my purposes have been studies written on philosophy from the perspective of Greek religion itself, as, e.g. Price, 1999: 126–42; Burkert, 1985: 305–37; Meijer, 1981; Nilsson, 1967: 741–5, 767–71 and 1961: 249–309; Morrow, 1960; Reverdin, 1945; and Decharme, 1904.

[Socrates] used to pray to the gods simply to give 'the good things' (*τὰ ἀγαθά*) since the gods know best what kinds of things are good. He thought that those who prayed for gold, silver, tyranny, or some other such thing were praying for nothing different than if they should pray for a dice game or a battle or any other of those things whose outcomes are unclear.

The questions I ask of this passage (in Ch. 2) are, (1) Did ordinary Greeks in fact pray for 'gold, silver, tyranny', or other such things attributed to them here and elsewhere in the philosophical tradition; (2) Does Plato attribute to Socrates this same practice described by Xenophon; (3) Did Xenophon and Plato represent Socrates consistently following this practice in his own prayers; (4) Are there among the philosophers predecessors to Xenophon's and Plato's Socrates who recommended this same practice and for the same reasons; and (5) Was this practice recommended and upheld among Plato's philosophical successors? Different passages discussed will generate different types of questions, some focused more on practised religion, some more on philosophy, but all, I think, will combine some aspects of both.

For this study I use the writings of philosophers of both the classical and early Hellenistic periods because it is becoming increasingly clear that for most Greeks in the early Hellenistic period practised religion remained very much what it had been in the classical period. Plato is the core. His surviving writings are by far the most voluminous,[4] but more importantly he offers in his writings a precious blend of contemporary social history and innovative

[4] I have found valuable material also in the following works usually attributed to Plato in antiquity but whose ascription to him is now for various reasons questioned by some: *Alcibiades* 1 and 2, *Clitophon*, *Definitions*, *Epinomis*, *Hipparchus*, *Hippias Major* and *Minor*, *Minos*, and *Theages*. If not by Plato, most are apparently products of the Academy shortly after Plato and hence of value for understanding the philosophical climate of the time. I designate the author of these not as Plato (Pl.) but as [Plato] ([Pl.]), not so much to deny their Platonic authorship as to indicate uncertainty. For recent discussions of Platonic authorship, see, for *Alc.* 1, Denyer, 2001: 14–26; for *Alc.* 2, Hutchinson, 1997: 557–8; for *Clit.*, Slings, 1999: 215–34; for *Def.*, Hutchinson, 1997: 1677–8; for *Epi.*, Tarán, 1975; for *Hipparch.* and *Min.*, Mulroy, 2007; for *Hp.Ma.*, Kahn, 1985: 267–73 and Woodruff, 1982: pp. xi–xii and for *Hp.Mi.*, Jantzen, 1989: pp. xi–xiii; and for *Thg.*, Joyal, 2000: 121–34. For my purposes I accept the sometimes contested ascription of the *Eudemian Ethics* to Aristotle but reject the *Magna Moralia*. On both see Bobonich, 2006: 14–16.

theology. He also, at times, as in the *Laws*, attempts to accommodate contemporary religious beliefs and practices to his endeavours to create a more perfect society.[5] Xenophon of Athens is a valuable supplement to Plato, a contemporary who particularly in the *Memorabilia* offers numerous accounts, some paralleled in Plato, many not, of Socrates' responses to the religious beliefs and practices of his time.[6] I have not attempted to recreate the 'religion' of Socrates, Plato, or Xenophon,[7] or to distinguish—if such a distinction is even valid—between the views of the 'historical' Socrates of Plato's early dialogues and the more Platonic Socrates of the middle and later dialogues,[8] but rather I gather what Plato and Xenophon, sometimes in contradictory ways, make their Socrates say about the religion of his time. Since Plato's and Xenophon's presentations of the religious beliefs and statements of Socrates do differ in some important aspects,[9] I attempt to indicate always whether we have before us Plato's or Xenophon's Socrates. What Plato and Xenophon have Socrates or other Greeks say about religion may or may not reflect accurately these individuals' own views, but they do reflect what was being said about practised religion in the philosophical

[5] On the value of the *Laws* for understanding contemporary Greek religion, see Morgan, 1992: 240–4; Burkert, 1985: 332–7; Morrow, 1960; and Reverdin, 1945, *passim*, and esp. 4 and 244–50. On Plato's use of religion in the *Laws*, see also Dodds, 1951: 212, 216, and 219–24.

[6] For discrepancies between Plato's and Xenophon's account of Socrates and attempts to find the underlying causes, particularly in the area of religion, see Vlastos, 1991 and Beckman, 1979: 13–16, 77–82, 215–30, and 247–50. For similarities (some being the same as Vlastos's discrepancies) in the same areas, see McPherran, 1996: 286–9.

[7] For a few of the many attempts to describe various aspects of the religious beliefs of these philosophers, see, for Socrates, the several essays in Smith and Woodruff, 2000; McPherran, 1996; Vlastos, 1991; Beckman, 1979; Babut, 1974: 59–74. For Plato, Herrmann, 2007; McPherran, 1996: 291–302; Morgan, 1992 and 1990; Babut, 1974: 75–104; Dodds, 1951: 207–35. And for Xenophon, Parker, 2004; Bowden, 2004; Pownall, 1998; Dillery, 1995: 179–94.

[8] For some basic principles for dividing between the 'two' Socrates, see Vlastos, 1991: 45–80. For doubts about the distinction between the historical and Platonic Socrates, see Gocer, 2000. On this and related topics see also Annas, 1999, especially 9–30; Cooper, 1997: pp. viii–xviii; and Kahn, 1996, esp. 38–42 and 88–95.

[9] See Vlastos, 1991 for differences but also McPherran, 1996 for similarities. On this general topic see also Kahn, 1996: 29–35, 75–9, and 393–401.

circles of these times, and that is what I am searching for. I look also to the Presocratic philosophers such as Heraclitus, Pythagoras, and Xenophanes and to Socrates' contemporaries such as Democritus and Prodicus particularly in those matters in which they anticipate or share or offer alternatives to what is to be found in the 'Socratic' literature. Finally, I treat the reactions to popular religion as they emerge in what might be called the first generations of Plato's successors, that is, in Xenocrates of the Academy; in Aristotle and Theophrastus of the Lyceum; in Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus of the Stoa; in Epicurus of the Garden; and in the Cynics Diogenes of Sinope and Bion of Borysthenes. These philosophers all lived at least for a time in Athens, some participated in varying degrees in cults of the time, and all were in a position to observe first-hand Greek religion as it was being practised. I do not attempt a survey of all Academic, Stoic, and Epicurean theories about practised religion, many of which were created or developed by philosopher-scholars who were far removed, by place and time, from classical Greek religion. For the Stoics, Epicureans, and Cynics I include only statements and theories expressly attributed to specific philosophers of the early Hellenistic period, not those attributed to Stoics, Epicureans, or Cynics in general. In searching for philosophers who comment on ancient Greek religious beliefs and practices, I limit myself to those who were commenting on a religious system that they personally knew, and I leave aside those later ones, many from the Roman period, who were building theories on or against the views of those who had known what they were describing.

Greek religion faced challenges not so much from competing religious systems as from the new theologies developed by Plato and his successors in the Academy, Aristotle and his successors at the Lyceum, Zeno and later Stoics, Epicurus and his followers, and, of course, the Cynics. It was from there that the very foundations of Greek religion were sometimes attacked, and Greek religion, lacking a centralized and controlling priesthood responsible for the whole, did not respond to these attacks in any organized way, and we have no written tracts that describe and defend its fundamental tenets. We have only the descriptions, criticisms, and rival systems of the philosophical schools and others, but from these and the accommodations they made with practised religion we can view from

another angle some important widespread beliefs of the common people about their gods and cult practices. And, in turn, these philosophical discussions of practised religion reveal much about the concerns of the philosophers in these areas.

TERMINOLOGY

Studies of Greek religion (including my own) and philosophy have for too long been hamstrung by convenient but inaccurate and misleading translations of Greek religious terminology, especially in the use of 'piety' and 'pious' for εὐσέβεια and εὐσεβής, 'holiness' and 'holy' or 'piety' and 'pious' for ὁσιότης and ὅσιος,[10] and 'happiness' and 'happy' for εὐδαιμονία and εὐδαίμων, each laden with denotations and connotations completely inappropriate to the Greek context.[11] Good work has been done over the years in isolating the real

[10] Less common, but equally misleading, for ὁσιότης is 'sacredness' (Yunis, 1988*a*: 101). Adkins (1960: 132) offers 'pious', 'devout', and 'religious' for both ὅσιος and εὐσεβής, while noting their limitations.

[11] 'Holy' for ὅσιος is an excellent example. The *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (2007) offers e.g. these definitions of 'holy': 'Kept or regarded as inviolate from ordinary use, and appropriated or set apart for religious use or observance; consecrated, dedicated, sacred.' The Greek for which is ἱερός. 'As applied to deities, the development has probably been: Held in religious regard or veneration, kept reverently sacred from human profanation or defilement; hence, Of a character that evokes human veneration and reference.' The Greek for which is σεμνός. 'Of persons: Specially belonging to, commissioned by, or devoted to God (or so regarded): e.g. angels, the Virgin Mary…' 'Of things: Pertaining to God or the Divine Persons; having their origin or sanction from God, or partaking of a Divine quality or character.' 'More generally: Of high and reverend excellence.' 'Conformed to the will of God, entirely devoted to God: in earlier times connoting the practice of asceticism and religious observances; now usually: Morally and spiritually unstained; free from sinful affection; of godly character and life; sanctified, saintly; sinless.' We can, I think, pass over the expletives, 'holy cow!', 'holy Moses!', and 'holy smoke!' These definitions from the *OED* are drawn almost entirely from the Christian tradition, and none suits ὅσιος.

A few recent examples from many possible, these from Plato's *Euthyphro* where the nature of τὸ ὅσιον is the prime concern, are sufficient to illustrate the problem. In the vocabulary of his edition Bailly (2003) has 'holy' for ὅσιος (but regularly translated as 'pious' in the commentary) and 'pious' for εὐσεβής, but in the commentary terms (95) them synonymous and describes (96) the phrase εὐσεβές τε καὶ ὅσιον in *Euthphr.* 12e7 as 'pleonastic'. Rudhardt (1958: 15) also terms εὐσεβής and

meaning of these and other religious terms,[12] and scholars of Greek religion and philosophy, for the most part, recognize the inadequacy of their translations and occasionally note the terms' proper meanings at the beginnings of articles and books, but their continued use of such English translations (and similar French and German translations) has concealed some important features of the Greek religious outlook from non-experts and even from the scholars themselves. In particular, inappropriate and varying translations of critical terms such as εὐσεβής and ὅσιος have tended to conceal their individual features and their relationship to other key concepts, especially to δίκαιος ('just'). Throughout this book I attempt to give more accurate and consistent translations of Greek religious terms about which there has been error and great variety, despite the additional wordiness and awkwardness, in the hope that a more precise and consistent description of these religious concepts will shed some additional light on fundamental and sometimes distinctive features of these words and of Greek religion in general, or, put in Greek terms, on what 'service to the gods' entailed. Whether the attempted consistency and precision in the usage of these and various other terms to be introduced later are worth the effort and the variance from current practice will be determined only by the results in the pages that follow.

● εὐδαιμονία: *eudaimonia* (adj. εὐδαίμων: *eudaimon*). εὐδαιμονία etymologically means 'to have a good *daimon*', but by the fourth century seems largely to have lost this link with the supernatural.[13] In some modern studies εὐδαιμονία is transliterated as I do it,[14] but in

ὅσιος *synonymes* in the *Euthyphro*. McPherran (2000*b*: 300 n. 5) states, 'I will assume here, as most commentators do, that εὐσεβής is used synonymously with another term occurring in the *Euthyphro*, "ὅσιος" (piety as it designates that sphere of life allocated by the gods to humans), since to all appearances they are used interchangeably and unsystematically', and so he does in his voluminous writings on Platonic and Socratic piety and religion.

[12] See esp. Connor, 1988; Chantraine, 1983; Benveniste, 1969; Adkins, 1960; Rudhardt, 1958; and Bolkestein, 1936.

[13] For some remnants of the *daimon* in *eudaimonia*, especially in tragedy, see Mikalson, 2002.

[14] As in Adkins, 1960, for whose general discussion of *eudaimonia* see pp. 251–4 and 282–3. Also, Morgan, 1990 and Whiting, 2006.

most it is translated, misleadingly, I think, as 'happiness'.[15] 'Happy' may, as in the phrase 'a happy life', designate the quality of a life, but most commonly it, and especially the noun 'happiness', describes an emotion. *Eudaimonia* is not an emotion but a status of life or an activity,[16] defined by the philosophers themselves as 'living well',[17] 'faring well',[18] 'having all the good things' (*τὰ ἀγαθά*),[19] 'being in need of nothing'.[20] The early Stoics defined *eudaimonia* as 'a good flow of life' (*εὔροια βίου*).[21] The wise Diotima in Plato's *Symposium* (205a1–3) claims that the *eudaimones* are *eudaimones* by the possession of 'good things' and there is no need to ask further why the person wishes to be *eudaimon*. Similarly for Aristotle *eudaimonia* is a 'good' for its own sake and by itself it makes life desirable and in need of nothing more.[22] What it means 'to live well' or 'to fare well' and what the 'good things' are become, of course, topics of much dispute and discussion both in antiquity and today, but, for our purposes, *eudaimonia* and *eudaimon* indicate possession of that which is, in the writer's opinion, the highest human good.[23] To avoid confusion with

[15] On this error, see Adkins, 1960: 257 n. 12. For the best defence of the traditional translation 'happiness', see Vlastos, 1984: 181–2 = 1991: 201–3. See also Whiting, 2006: 302 n. 2; Long, 1996: 181–4; Kraut, 1979; and Gould, 1970: 161 n. 2. On the now becoming fashionable 'flourishing' for *eudaimonia*, see Broadie, 2006: 342–4.

[16] For Aristotle's *eudaimonia* as an 'activity', see *EN* 10.1176a31–b2 and Devereux, 2004: 270–3.

[17] e.g. Pl. *Rep.* 1.354a1–2 and Arist. *EN* 1.1095a19–20. Cf. Pl. *Lg.* 7.816d1–2 and 8.828d8–829a2.

[18] e.g. Pl. *Gorg.* 507c3–5, *Chrm.* 172a2–3, 173d3–4, and 174b11–c1 (cf. *Lg.* 3.686e4–8); [Pl.] *Alc.* 1.116b5–6 and 134d7–e2; and Arist. *EN* 1.1095a19–20.

[19] e.g. Pl. *Smp.* 202c10–12, 205a1–4, *Euthd.* 280b5–e2 (cf. *Gorg.* 478c3–7 and 494e5–6 and *Lg.* 2.661d6–e4); [Pl.] *Alc.* 1.116b7–8; and Xen. *Mem.* 1.6.10.

[20] Pl. *Gorg.* 492e3–4, 494c2–3, and *Lg.* 3.694d2–4.

[21] Zeno, *SVF* 1.184; Cleanthes and Chrysippus, *SVF* 1.554. On the Stoic view of *eudaimonia*, see Long, 1996: 179–201.

[22] Arist. *EN* 1.1097a34–b21, 10.1176b5–6, and 1178b33–1179a16.

[23] Cf. Arist. *EN* 1.1095a14–20. For the possibility that for Plato the 'highest good' may be justice, not *eudaimonia*, see Devereux, 2004: 304–5.

Throughout the philosophical literature *ἄθλιος* is the antonym of *εὐδαίμων* (see Pl. *Rep.* 1.354a4–6, [Pl.] *Alc.* 1.134a6–b6, and examples in Mikalson, 2002: 257 n. 25), and suffers from a similar misunderstanding. Usually translated as 'miserable' or 'unhappy', it suggests that 'happy' might be correct for *εὐδαίμων*. But *ἄθλιος* indicates more specifically someone for whom there are 'contests' or 'struggles' (*ἆθλοι*), the opposite of one who is 'faring well'. Just as the *εὐδαίμων* person may be 'happy' because he is *εὐδαίμων*, so the *ἄθλιος* may be 'miserable' because he is *ἄθλιος*, but both are accessory to the core meaning of the adjectives.

the emotion 'happiness' I will use the transliterations *eudaimonia* and *eudaimon*.

- *εὐσέβεια*: etymologically 'proper respect', in place of the common 'piety', and 'properly respectful' for *εὐσεβής* in place of 'pious', and 'lack of respect' and 'not respectful' for their antonyms *ἀσέβεια* and *ἀσεβής*, commonly given as 'impiety' and 'impious'. These translations have the advantage, in addition to eliminating possibly inappropriate connotations of 'piety', of allowing the 'respect' to be directed, as it is in the Greek tradition, to persons and things as well as to gods.[24]
- *θεραπεία*, *ὑπηρεσία*, and *λατρεία*: 'service' for the first, and 'a subordinate's service', for the latter two. In a religious context *θεραπεία* and its cognates are, *mutatis mutandis*, commonly translated as 'worship', 'tendance', 'care', and 'service'.[25] 'Tendance', 'care', and 'service' here are all possible, but I prefer 'service' because it suggests an important element in the religious context, that is, the inferiority of the server to the served. *ὑπηρετικός* and its cognates explicitly indicate the 'service' of an inferior to a superior.[26] Homonymous with *ὑπηρετικὴ θεραπεία* are *ὑπηρεσία* and its cognates.[27] *λατρεία*, too, is 'subordinate's service', sometimes with the connotation 'for wages'.[28] *θεραπεία τῶν θεῶν* is the most common expression of 'service to the gods',[29] but we will find it,

[24] 'Proper respect' for *εὐσέβεια* and its cognates: '*εὐσεβής* qui n'implique que le respect des dieux et des rites', Chantraine, 1983: 831. Cf. 992; 'literally "reverent" ', Kearns in *OCD*[3], p. 1301. See also Rudhardt, 1958: 13–17 and Bolkestein, 1936: 200–10. For a link between *εὐσεβεῖν* and *σεμνύνειν*, see Pl. *Phlb.* 28a4–b2.

[25] 'Worship': LSJ, Marchant, 1923 at Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.13; 'courtesy': Marchant, 1923 at *Mem.* 2.2.13; 'tendance': Burnet, 1924 on Pl. *Euthphr.* 12e5–8 and McPherran, 1996: 52; 'care' in Burkert, 1985: 273 for the 'sich bemühen' of Burkert, 1977: 409; 'service': LSJ, Chantraine, 1983: 430 ('service', 'soins').

[26] See Chantraine, 1983: 1159 and e.g. Pl. *Lg.* 12.968a1–4 and *La.* 198e4–5.

[27] See e.g. the combination of Pl. *Lg.* 5.740b8–c2, 6.773e6–774a1, 776b1–4, and 9.878a6–7. For *ὑπηρεσία* in a religious context, see Pl. *Ap.* 30a5–7, *Lg.* 4.715c2–4. Cf. *Euthphr.* 13d5–7, *Ion* 534c7–d4, and *Smp.* 196c1–2. That Socrates in *Rep.* 2.364c4–5 has charlatans persuading god to give them 'subordinate's service' (*ὑπηρετεῖν*) reflects the perversity and error of the beliefs and practices he is describing.

[28] See Chantraine, 1983: 622–3. For examples in a religious context, see Pl. *Ap.* 23b9–c1 and 30a6–7 and *Phdr.* 244e1–2.

[29] The *θεῶν* of *θεραπεία θεῶν* is an objective, not a subjective or possessive genitive, as the subordinate nature of the 'service' indicates. The gods are the recipients of the 'service' and so I translate the phrase as 'service to the gods', not—which would be ambiguous—'service of the gods'.

too, as *ὑπηρεσία τῶν θεῶν* and *λατρεία τοῦ θεοῦ* and their cognate expressions. *ἀθεραπευσία* is the failure to provide the expected 'service'.[30]

- *ἱερός*: 'belonging to a god', 'sacred'. Places that 'belong to a god', often termed simply *ἱερά*, are 'sanctuaries'.[31]
- *ἱεροσυλία*: 'stealing sacred things'. *ἱεροσυλία* and cognates are very commonly translated as 'temple robbing', no doubt in part because so LSJ, wrongly on two counts, renders them. The question is whether the *ἱερά* of *ἱεροσυλία* are the objects taken or the places robbed. No passages definitively answer this, but Dem. 24.120 suggests the former.[32] In Greek one most commonly 'robs' a thing or a person, not a place.[33] All examples of *ἱεροσυλία* and cognates I have used for this study may be translated as 'stealing sacred things', without violence to the context. In any case, *ἱεροσυλία* should never be translated 'robbing temples'. *ἱερά* as places are 'sanctuaries'. Some sanctuaries had temples, most did not, and the existence (or not) of a temple is irrelevant to *ἱεροσυλία*.[34] We find *ἱεροσυλία*, not *ναοσυλία*. Finally, *ἱεροσυλία* covers a quite specific range of crimes, and there is never a reason, as in LSJ, to generalize it as 'sacrilege'.

[30] Pl. *Rep.* 4.443a9–10 and *Ep.* 8.356b2–5.

[31] Burkert, 1985: 269. Chantraine, 1983: 457–8, '*ἱερός* exprime ce qui appartient aux dieux ou vient d'eux, ce qui manifeste une puissance surnaturelle…' Etymologically *ἱερός* might mean 'strong' or 'forceful', which some (e.g. Rudhardt, 1958: 22–30) would see also as a connotation of some classical usages, but even all but a very few of the Homeric usages can be accommodated to Chantraine's description above. See e.g. Chantraine, *loc. cit.* and Benveniste, 1969: ii. 192–6. More generally on *ἱερός*, see also Kearns, 1995: 512–13. On *ἱερά* as 'sanctuaries', see Horster, 2004, esp. 49–52.

[32] *οὐ καὶ κλέπται καὶ ἱερόσυλοί εἰσιν, τὰ μὲν ἱερά, τὰς δεκάτας τῆς θεοῦ καὶ τὰς πεντηκοστὰς τῶν ἄλλων θεῶν, σεσυληκότες καὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀποδοῦναι αὐτοὶ ἔχοντες, τὰ δ' ὅσια, ἃ ἐγίνετο ὑμέτερα, κεκλοφότες*; see also Dem. 24.122; Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.22, *Ages.* 11.1; Pl. *Euthphr.* 5d8–10 and *Lg.* 9.854a7–b1, 857b3–5, and 869b3–4; Arist. *EN* 4.1122a6 and *Rh.* 1.1374a4–5; and Lycurg. *Leoc.* 65 and 136. The best study of *hierosylia*, which distinguishes between Athenian and other Greek contexts and which also notes the different provisions for the different kinds of sacred property stolen, embezzled, or misused, is Cohen, 1983: 93–115.

[33] As in Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.22 and Pl. *Euthphr.* 5d9 and *Lg.* 9.869b3–4 and 864d1.

[34] Todd (1993: 307) properly has 'the theft of sacred property' for *ἱεροσυλία* in the text but 'temple robbery' in the accompanying note. Even Cohen (1983) occasionally mentions 'stealing sacred property from temples'.

- *ἱλάσκομαι*: 'to make a god *ἵλεως*, propitious'. If the god is, for some reason, 'angry', it may be taken to mean 'appease' the god. *ἵλεως* is often paired with *εὐμενής*, 'kindly'.[35] Although *ἵλεως* and cognates may be used of humans (see LSJ s.v.), Plato (*Lg.* 7.792d2–5) speaks of it as a commonly recognized divine disposition.[36]
- *νομίζειν τοὺς θεούς*: 'to recognize the gods'. The phrase may indicate the worship of the gods in conventional ways, the belief that the gods exist, or both. Since neither a transliteration nor a full statement of the meaning is practical for each occurrence of the phrase (twenty-one times in Plato), I have selected 'recognize' as at least suggesting both aspects. *νομίζειν τοὺς θεοὺς εἶναι* is, however, more precise, and is translated as 'to believe the gods exist'.[37]

ὁσιότης: 'religious correctness' in place of the common 'holiness', 'piety', or 'righteousness', and 'religiously correct' for *ὅσιος* in place of 'holy', 'pious', or 'righteous',[38] with 'religious incorrectness' and 'religiously incorrect' for their antonyms *ἀνοσιότης* and *ἀνόσιος*.[39]

[35] As in Pl. *Lg.* 4.712b4–6, *Rep.* 6.496e2, and *Phdr.* 257a7.

[36] Cf. *Euthd.* 273e5–7.

[37] McPherran, 2000*a*: 90–1; Parker, 1996: 201 n. 8; Versnel, 1990: 124–5; Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 30–2; Gould, 1985: 7; Beckman, 1979: 55–6; Henrichs, 1975: 107 n. 57; and especially Fahr, 1969. Reeve, 2000: 28 attempts to embrace all this, and a bit more, in his definition of *νομίζειν θεούς*: 'though *primarily* a matter of giving the gods the worship prescribed by *nomos*, through participating in the services, rites, and rituals sanctioned by tradition, in fact encompasses all behavior that shows proper acknowledgement of the existence of the gods'.

[38] Of these 'righteous', as in Dover, 1974: 248, is best, but I have avoided it because of its strong Christian connotations.

[39] Chantraine, 1983: 831, '*ὅσιος* désigne ce qui est permis, recommandé aux hommes par des dieux'; Motte, 1989: 17, *ὅσιος* as 'tout ce qui est conforme à un ordre censé voulu par les dieux'. See also von Staden, 1997: 182–3 and Benveniste, 1969: ii. 198–202. For the most recent attempt to determine the etymology of *ὅσιος*, see Hinge, 2007. The phrase *ὅσια καὶ ἱερά* (e.g. Pl. *Rep.* 1.344a7–b5 and *Lg.* 9.878a7) is explained by such passages such as Dem. 24.9 and 120: *τῶν ἱερῶν μὲν χρημάτων τοὺς θεούς, τῶν ὁσίων δὲ τὴν πόλιν ἀποστερεῖ* and *τὰ μὲν ἱερά, τὰς δεκάτας τῆς θεοῦ καὶ τὰς πεντηκοστὰς τῶν ἄλλων θεῶν, σεσυληκότες. . .τὰ δ' ὅσια, ἃ ἐγίγνετο ὑμέτερα, κεκλοφότες*. Here are indicated two types of funds in Athens: *ἱερά* belonging to the gods and *ὅσια* belonging to the city and available for its use. The inclination is to term the first 'sacred' and the second 'profane', but 'profane' is counter to all other uses of *ὅσια*. In fact, the city's money is 'religiously correct' to use for profane purposes because it is not under any religious restrictions, i.e. it does not belong to a god, it is not *ἱερά*. Similarly, for a place being *ὅσιον* and thus unlike a *ἱερόν* suitable for childbirth, see Aristophanes, *Lys.* 743. Understood in this way, *ὅσια* can maintain its established meaning as 'religiously correct', but can best be translated, paradoxically,

ἀφοσίουν: 'to make religiously correct' another person (active, as in Pl. *Euthphr.* 4c2 and *Lg.* 9.873b7–8) or oneself (middle, as in *Phdr.* 242b8–c3 and *Lg.* 9.874a2).[40]

• *σωφροσύνη*: 'sound thinking'; *σώφρων*, a person with 'sound thoughts'.[41] 'Sound thinking' may, of course, be applied in a whole range of areas,[42] and Plato's common but by no means exclusive use of it to express containment of appetites and passions by reason has led to the familiar translation 'temperance', which suits only one aspect of its usages, one that is not particularly relevant to this study.[43] Although a matter of 'thought' and hence 'intellectual', it is

as 'non-sacred'. See von Staden, 1997: 182–3 and Jeanmaire, 1945. Connor, 1988 offers an excellent study of the extension of the concept *ὅσια καὶ ἱερά* beyond the financial realm, but for his further extension of *ὅσια* to include 'rightness', that is 'justice' in human affairs, see Ch. 5.

[40] The meaning 'to do something for (only) form's sake' appears occasionally in the fourth century BCE (Pl. *Ep.* 7.331b3–4 and Is. 7.38) and becomes common in Plutarch. LSJ wrongly puts Pl. *Lg.* 6.752d3–5 into this category. On *ἀφοσίουν* see Chantraine, 1983: 832 and Rudhardt, 1958: 168–70.

[41] Pl. *Prt.* 333d5–6. Rademaker, 2005: 252, in opening a discussion of 'The Uses of *σώφρων* and Cognates in Plato's Time': '*Soundness of Mind*'. 'It is convenient to start with the one group of uses where *σωφροσύνη* means exactly what etymology would seem to suggest: "with unimpaired *φρένεσ* (*σως*)", i.e. "with a normal, properly functioning mind" as opposed to various states of madness and frenzy.'

[42] Rademaker, 2005: 251–69, isolates eighteen 'clusters of uses' for *σωφροσύνη* and cognates.

[43] Dodds, 1959: 336 notes that the opposite to *σώφρων* as 'sensible' is *ἄφρων*, but its opposite as 'self-controlled' is *ἀκόλαστος*. For *σωφροσύνη* as control by reason over pleasures and desires, see e.g. Pl. *Phdr.* 237e1–238a2 and *Smp.* 196c4–5. Closely related is the definition in *Rep.* 4.432a6–b1 that *σωφροσύνη* is a harmony, an agreement between that which is worst and that which is best by nature as to which must rule in both the city and each individual. Cf. 4.442c9–d4. For a combination of both elements, see 3.389d9–e2. For *σωφροσύνη* as primarily 'orderliness' (*κόσμος*), in not pursuing unfitting activities, humans, pleasures, and pains, in contrast to 'lack of restraint' (*ἀκολασία*), see *Grg.* 506e6–507e2. 'Temperance', without some violence to the term, suits none of the seven definitions and descriptions of *σωφροσύνη*, some quite bizarre, put forward (and rejected) in Plato's *Charmides*: (1) To do all things in an orderly and calm way (159b2–3). (2) It is like 'shame' (*αἰδώς*) and gives a person a sense of shame (160e2–5). (3) It is to do the things of oneself (161b6). (4) It is the doing or making of good things (163e1–2). (5) It is to know oneself (164d3–4; cf. [Pl.] *Alc.* 1.131b4–5 and *Amat.* 138a5–10). (6) It is a knowledge (*ἐπιστημή*) of knowledge(s) (166e5–6). (7) It is to know that oneself or another person knows and does not know (167a1–7 and 172a4–5). On these meanings of *σωφροσύνη* and its cognates in the *Charmides*, see Rademaker, 2005: 3–7 and 323–40.

normally applied to some kind of behaviour, and hence has a strong 'moral' colouring.[44]

- *τιμή*: 'honour', or, much less often, 'office'. As verb, 'to honour'. As an example in the secular world, a king has an office and functions (*τιμή*), and for this he receives 'honour' (*τιμή*) from his subjects.[45] For more on this 'honour' as it concerns the gods, see Chapters 1 and 4.

- *φίλος*, as adjective, 'dear'. *φίλος* and *φιλία* are complex terms about which both the ancients and moderns have written books. They are problematic to translate in their noun, adjectival, and verbal forms. In a religious context an action may be *φίλον* to the gods or a person may be *θεοφιλής*. These and their verbal equivalents are often treated as 'god-*loved*', but we must be sure of the nature of that 'love' because it affects so greatly our understanding of a god's feeling for man and his actions. *φίλος*, in classical Greek, as a noun is 'friend', that is 'a party to a voluntary bond of affection and goodwill, and normally excludes both close kin and more distant acquaintances whether neighbors or fellow-citizens'.[46] Usually with the genitive, as 'friend *of* Philip'. *φιλία*, as the abstract noun, is 'friendship', 'affection', or 'mutual affection'. But *φίλος* as an adjective, 'dear', may be applied more broadly, beyond the range of 'friendship' to family members, other kinds of acquaintances, and even objects. Usually with the dative, as 'dear *to* the gods'. The verbal forms (*φιλεῖν*) may reflect both the noun ('to treat as a "friend"') and the adjective ('to consider "dear"'). Given the limitations of English, I transform some of the verbal expressions (for example, x *φιλεῖται ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν*) into a 'dear' form, as 'x is dear to the gods'. 'Dear' seems to me best, though certainly not perfectly, to capture the adjectival and verbal uses of *φίλος* in a religious context without introducing inappropriate connotations of 'love'. For more on this relationship of men to gods, see Chapter 4.

[44] On all aspects of *σωφροσύνη* see Rademaker, 2005 and North, 1966.

[45] Mikalson, 1991: 183–202.

[46] The definition of Konstan, 1997: 28–31 and 53–6, to whom this brief discussion of *φίλος* is much indebted. See also England, 1921, on Pl. *Lg.* 8.837a7.

• χάρις: *charis*. A *charis* was a favour that brought to the recipient delight and pleasure, and there was the expectation that such a favour rendered required a favour bringing delight and pleasure in return. Each of those elements is essential to its meaning. Aristotle offers the clearest explanation of *charis*: 'Repayment (ἀνταπόδοσις) is the "distinctive feature" of *charis* (ἴδιον χάριτος). For it is necessary to give a return service (ἀνθυπηρετῆσαι) to the one who has given *charis* and again oneself to begin giving *charis*' (*EN* 5.1133a3–5). One may well feel 'gratitude' upon receipt of such a favour, and for this reason *charis* is often translated simply as 'gratitude' or 'thanks', but this is a misleading oversimplification of the relationship.[47] An individual's reaction to receiving such a *charis* is to be κεχαρισμένος, etymologically related to *charis*, meaning essentially 'to be put into the *charis* relationship'. Delightful favours, when received by the gods, are κεχαρισμένα, and here the offerings should be thought not merely as 'pleasing',[48] but as 'pleasing (or acceptable) in the context of the *charis*-relationship between men and gods'.[49] A *charis* was expected in return for a *charis*, and, in the religious context, what should be emphasized is the relationship based upon continuous mutual and mutually beneficent exchanges of pleasing favours between a human and a god, not merely the 'gratitude' or 'pleasure' a human or god may feel for a benefit received.[50] There is no simple English word to

[47] See Versnel, 1981*a*: 42–62.

[48] The verb for simply 'pleasing' a god, without the connotations of the *charis* relationship, is ἀρέσκειν. See Chantraine, 1983: 107, Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.17 and *Oec.* 5.3 and 19, and Theopompus in Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.16. Cf. Eur. frag. 948 [N] and S. *Ant.* 74–5 and 89.

[49] When Plato summarizes Chryses' prayer to Apollo from *Iliad* 1.34–42, he reformulates it in terms of χάρις, δῶρα, and κεχαρισμένον. Chryses had prayed, 'Σμινθεῦ, εἴ ποτέ τοι χαρίεντ' ἐπὶ νηὸν ἔρεψα, | ἢ εἰ δή ποτέ τοι κατὰ πίονα μηρί' ἔκηα | ταύρων ἠδ' αἰγῶν, τόδε μοι κρήηνον ἐέλδωρ. | τείσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν' (39–42).

Plato has Chryses praying 'to Apollo, calling out the epithets of the god and reminding him and asking if ever either in the buildings of temples or in the sacrifices of offerings he had presented (δωρήσαιτο) him anything κεχαρισμένον. Chryses prayed to Apollo that in χάρις for these things the Achaeans pay for his tears by the arrows of the god (*Rep.* 3.394a2–7). On this prayer in Homer, and on the emphasis on χάρις, see Gould, 1985: 14–16.

[50] 'The fundamental conception at all periods is that of an unceasing interchange of delightful gifts and services', p. 109 in the excellent study by Parker, 1998, to which my discussion of *charis* is much indebted. See also Gould, 1985: 15–16; Versnel, 1981*a*: 47–9; and Yunis, 1988*a*: 101–11.

offer as a translation of this complex of ideas,[51] and therefore in the following discussions we leave *charis* untranslated and render its cognates in terms of *charis*.

To indicate that I am using and translating the more problematic terms *εὐσέβεια*, *νομίζειν θεούς*, *ὁσιότης*, *σωφροσύνη*, and *φιλία* and their antonyms and cognates, I will enclose the translations in quotation marks.

THE DEITIES

There are, of course, many deities of many types just in that part of the Greek philosophical tradition on which we concentrate. From Plato alone we have the demiurge who virtually creates the universe as it is; the deities the demiurge creates, including the celestial deities such as the sun, moon, planets, and stars; Plato's own perfectly just and moral gods; his *daimones*; the deities as described by Homer, Hesiod, and the other poets; and some of the familiar figures of Greek cult.[52] To these we may add Epicurus' isolated figures living in utter serenity, Aristotle's god of philosophical contemplation,[53]

[51] Certainly not 'grace', as in the translation of Arist. *EN* 5.1133a3–5 (above) by Irwin (1999: 74–5): 'For this is what is special to grace; when someone has been gracious to us, we must do a service for him in return, and also ourselves take the lead in being gracious again.' Much the same is to be found in Crisp, 2000: 89 and Young, 2006: 187–8.

[52] For the Forms *not* being gods, but their complex relationship to the gods, see McPherran, 2006: 92–6; Meijer, 1981: 243–5. On that and on other important aspects of Plato's conceptions of gods, see Verdenius, 1952. On the gods and their various types in Plato's *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 434–61.

[53] On the difficult question of how to reconcile Aristotle's god of philosophical contemplation with Aristotle's various other discussions of divine characteristics and proper religious attitudes and of provisions for cult, that is, whether the latter are simply contradictions untroubling to Aristotle, are non-Aristotelian views inserted into his text, or are Aristotle's descriptions of common (but not his own) beliefs, I am inclined to follow Verdenius (1960) who emphasizes Aristotle's deep respect for widely held and old traditions, points to Aristotle's own mandate, through his will, for dedications to conventional deities (D.L. 5.16), and concludes that 'Aristotle takes it to be self-evident that the traditional gods should be worshiped, although the common representations of these gods flatly contradict his most fundamental convictions' (p. 60). Babut, 1974: 105–35 also accepts Verdenius' understanding of Aristotle's views on popular religion. Others' views will be noted for relevant passages.

and the Stoics' Reason. In this study we will encounter each of these, but we do so not for their own sake but to see how the philosophers relate them to the deities and practices of contemporary religion. Some of these will be treated in the context in which they occur, but four sets, the gods as described by Homer and the poetic tradition, the gods of cult, the celestial gods, and the *daimones* so permeate Plato's (and others') discussions of the divine world and will recur so often that some preliminary consideration of them is required.

Gods of cult and gods of poets

I distinguish, in ways that will be familiar to scholars of Greek religion, between the gods of cult, that is, those gods who were worshipped throughout the year with prayers, sacrifices, festivals, and such activities from the deities described by Homer, Hesiod, the Athenian tragedians, and the Greek poets in general. Although the poetic set was, presumably, at some very early stage drawn from the cult set, and although there are overlaps, particularly in names and iconography, between the two sets,[54] it is a particular feature of the Greek genius to have developed largely independently the two sets, with the poets such as Homer and Hesiod and the oral tradition before them creating the tales—we call them 'myths'—that became a pan-Hellenic common store from which later poets could draw, adapt, and create the characters of deities for their own poems.[55] In many ways distinct from these gods of poetry were the gods of local cult, most with their own local mythology, all with sanctuaries tended by families or states, all promising, in some form, health, safety, fertility, or economic success.[56] The distinction between the two groups was articulated by the Greeks themselves as early as the fourth century BCE and became a fundamental Greek way of thinking about the divine world. The descriptions of the gods by poets eventually came to be designated the *theologia fabularis*; the understanding of the gods determined by a city's laws and traditions was the *theologia civilis*. The third, and final, category was the *theologia*

[54] On both the origins and overlaps, see Mikalson, 2005: 34–8.
[55] On Homer in this regard, see Kearns, 2004.
[56] For whether the gods of cult also brought harm to individuals, see Ch. 6.

naturalis, the gods as taught by the Greek philosophers.[57] We can simplify all of this and unburden ourselves of the Latin terminology by designating the three categories as, respectively, the gods of poets, the gods of (state) cult, and the gods of philosophers. These distinctions between the types of gods, and especially the distinction between civic gods of cult and gods of poetry, however broadly drawn, are exceptionally important to this study and to the understanding of the relationship of Greek philosophical thought to Greek religion in general.[58] One could and did criticize or even ridicule, without penalty, the gods as described by the poets, gods such as the Zeus of Homer's *Iliad* and the Hera of Euripides' *Heracles*, in both poetry and prose, from Xenophanes in the late sixth century, to Aristophanes,

[57] These distinctions were expressly formulated by Poseidonius: 'Those who handed down to us reverence (*σεβασμόν*) concerning the gods set it out for us through three forms (*εἰδῶν*), first that of "nature" (*τοῦ φυσικοῦ*), second that of "myth" (*μυθικοῦ*), and third that which has taken its evidence from the *nomoi*. The one of "nature" is taught by the philosophers, that of "myth" by the poets, and that of *nomoi* is put together by each city' (Frag. 364 [Theiler] = Aëtius, *Plac.* 1.6.9). The formulation of the same tripartite division by Varro, *theologia naturalis*, *theologia fabularis*, and *theologia civilis*, is more familiar (in Augustine, *De civ. D.* 6.5). On the murky origins and long history of this concept, see Lieberg, 1979. Gerson, 1990: 1–14 defines the subject of his book, the early history of (Greek) natural theology, in terms of this threefold division. For Plato's implicit use of this threefold categorization of deities, see Ch. 6.

[58] These distinctions, as drawn, conceal many important areas of overlap, particularly between the gods of poets and the gods of cult. In Homer, for example, many of the gods, such as Zeus and Poseidon, have some functions regularly associated with them in cult, many of the gods are described in physical terms in accord with the iconography of cult deities, and many of the rituals of sacrifice, prayer, oath-taking, and such are those also of practised religion. The differences lie primarily in the accounts of their personalities and behaviour. For a brief discussion of the relationships of the gods of Homer, Hesiod, and other poetic literature to those of cult, see Mikalson, 2005: 34–8. For the representation of deities and popular religion in tragedy, see Mikalson, 1991. Parker, in a thoughtful essay (1997), sees the gods of tragedy reflecting significant, often darker and questioning aspects of Greeks' beliefs about the gods they worshipped, that is, a significant overlap between the gods of tragic poetry and those of cult. But even Parker notes major differences between those gods of tragedy and those of what he terms 'civic theology', in our terms between the gods as described by the poets and the gods described in the prose sources for state cult. For the same claim of the gods of tragedy reflecting those of cult, see Sourvinou-Inwood, 1997 and, at great length, 2003. Kearns, 1995: 524–5 urges consideration of 'the three religious perspectives' (myth, cult, and 'question and analysis: what are the gods really like?') as contemporaneous elements of the Greek consciousness, all three 'religious' and often held by the same person.

to Plato and fellow philosophers, to the Church Fathers in the early centuries CE, and to moralizing critics today.[59] These are the gods of the poets. The gods of cult are, for example, Athena Polias of Athens, Demeter of Eleusis, Asclepius of Epidaurus, and—although he has a foot in both worlds—Apollo of Delphi. We know them from descriptions in the orators, historians, and travel writers, from hymns and dedicatory inscriptions, from statues and vase paintings, from their own myths (sometimes in poetic form, most often not), and from a variety of other such sources. There are hundreds of them in each major Greek city state, and they are the gods worshipped with sacrifice, prayer, and dedications. They are the gods of popular, practised religion. The philosophical response to them and to the beliefs and cult practices concerning them, and sometimes even the overlap between the gods of philosophers and those of cult are a primary topic of this book. I make these distinctions strongly here because modern discussions of Greek philosophical criticism of religion treat the gods of the poets as the gods of cult, or, to state the point more vividly but less inclusively, they make the gods as described by Homer and Hesiod the gods of Greek practised religion, and think that, for example, Plato, in criticizing the former, is criticizing the latter. That may be true (for which see Ch. 6), but in a much less direct way than the modern scholarly tradition presents it.[60] I close this discussion of the three 'theologies' by quoting an extremely important conclusion drawn by Glenn Most (2003: 308):

[59] As Burnet (1924: 34) put it memorably in terms of the ancient Greeks, 'No one could be prosecuted for disbelieving Hesiod's *Theogony*.' See Most, 2003, esp. 305–7; McPherran, 1996: 142–3; Lloyd-Jones, 1983: 133–4; Dodds, 1973: 141–3; Jaeger, 1947: 213 n. 52. Note also Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 125–6.

[60] Modern scholars are inclined to compare and contrast the gods of the philosophers to the gods of the poets—which is perfectly sound so long as the gods of the poets are not confused with the gods of cult—but, I think, an error has crept in here, too. That error is to claim it is the Greek 'traditional belief' or 'traditional concept' that the gods are 'wise' or 'all wise', and upon this premise are built a number of discussions of the relationship of, say, Socrates and Plato to the religion of their time. 'Wise' is not a descriptor of the gods of the popular, cult tradition, and in the poetic tradition the wisdom (or justice or morality) of the gods or of individual gods can be either strongly affirmed or strongly rejected, depending on the author and the work. That *all* the gods, or the one god, are 'wise' and 'just' is first fully worked out in the Socratic tradition and is widely, if not universally, accepted in the philosophical tradition (for which see Ch. 5), but should not be treated as an established feature of the *theologia fabularis* or the *theologia civilis*. Studies based on this mistaken premise include Vlastos, 1991; Reeve, 2000; and McPherran, 2000*a* and 1996.

Whatever was the original purpose of Varro's celebrated distinction between three types of theology—mythic (the fables told by the poets), political (the cults acknowledged as legitimate in all ancient cities), and natural (the doctrines elaborated by the philosophers)—in practice it served to establish a clear division of labour between three separate forms of religiosity, thereby immunizing not only the great poets of the past, Homer and Hesiod above all, but also the institutions of the city, in their political and religious complicity, against any corrosive impact which might otherwise have derived from philosophical speculation about the true nature of divinity.

Celestial deities

Plato is the first in the philosophical tradition attested to have made the claim that the celestial bodies, the sun, moon, stars, and planets were gods.[61] In the *Timaeus* he has Timaeus claim that the demiurge, creator of the universe and everything in it, made the sun, moon, and stars as visible gods and gave to them their intricate, perfectly ordered movements. These celestial gods of the *Timaeus* are spherical, composed mostly of fire, but with intelligence and soul (38c2–40d5). In the *Cratylus* (397c8–d4) Socrates claims that the first Greeks believed that only the sun, moon, earth, stars, and sky were gods. In the *Laws* the sun, earth, stars, and well-ordered seasons serve as evidence of the existence of the gods (10.886a2–4, d4–e2 and 889b3–c6) because of both their visibility[62] and their perfectly ordered movements.[63] And

[61] On this see Nilsson, 1940 and 1961: 268–81. In *Republic* 6.508a4–6 Socrates speaks of the sun as being one of the 'gods in the sky'. On Plato's celestial gods in general, see Burkert, 1985: 325–9; Meijer, 1981: 241. On them in the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 445–8.

[62] See e.g. Pl. *Lg.* 7. 820e8–822d1, 10.885e7–886a5, *Cra.* 397c8–d4, *Ti.* 41a2–5, and [Pl.] *Epi. passim.*

[63] *Lg.* 7.821b2–d4, 10.885e7–886a5, 899b3–c1. The *Epinomis*, often attributed to Plato in antiquity but now widely rejected as spurious but composed shortly after Plato's time (Tarán, 1975), presents itself as an appendix to the *Laws* and picks up the discussion in the *Laws* (7.820e8–822d1) of the need to learn astronomy. It claims that the celestial bodies are either gods or images of gods that the gods have created. If the latter, these images surpass all common images of gods in that they are more beautiful, more shared by all humans, set up in better places (that is, in the sky), and superior in purity, in the respect they engender (σεμνότητι), and in their whole life (983e2–984b1). On this passage see Tarán, 1975: 85–8.

in *Laws* 7.821c6–d4 the lawgiver leaves the impression that these 'gods throughout the sky' should receive sacrifices and prayers.

In the classical and early Hellenistic period, the time of our philosophers, the celestial bodies as a group, that is the sun, moon, stars, and planets together, had no Greek cults and were not worshipped in the traditional ways by Greeks. Even cults of the most stellar among them, Helios, are rare: those at Rhodes and Corinth are best known, and both are perhaps imports.[64] In Athens no sanctuary of Helios is known, and dedications to him are few, the earliest perhaps third century BCE, the others much later.[65] In fact, worship of the sun (and moon) was treated as characteristic of non-Greeks. Aristophanes (*Pax* 409–13) could have Athenians claim in 421 that they sacrificed to the gods, but the barbarians sacrificed to Helios and Selene, a claim that tallies with Herodotus' statement that the Persians sacrifice to, among others, the sun and moon (1.131).[66] Plato, too, while he claimed early Greeks considered the celestial bodies gods, gives the impression that in his time it was non-Greeks who worshipped them (*Cra.* 397c8–d2). And, finally, the author of the *Epinomis* complains that the celestial gods are improperly neglected by the Greeks (985d4–986a4) and should be reclaimed and revered through the extensive study of mathematics, geometry, and astronomy.[67]

Although the sun and moon were not cult deities in this period in Athens, we should not relegate them to 'mythological', that is, literary figures and divorce them from Athenian religious feeling. Helios, in particular, held a special place in the Athenian pantheon. As an obvious and imposing power he was a god, but yet was not accessible to the usual forms of worship. As with the gods of cult one did not want to offend him with pollution and could invoke him in oaths,[68] and it is only through his special status that one can understand the Athenian charges of 'lack of respect' (ἀσέβεια) against Anaxagoras for

[64] Nilsson, 1967: 839.

[65] *IG* II² 3168, 4678, 4962, and 5000. For the status of Helios as a deity, see Mikalson, 1989: 97–8; Nilsson, 1967: 839–40; and Dodds, 1951: 232–3 n. 70.

[66] For the implicit contrast to Greek practices here, see Mikalson, 2003: 156.

[67] For this, see esp. [Pl.] *Epinomis* 976e4–977a6, 981d5–984b6, 984d5–8, 985d4–988a5, and 990a2–992e1. On how the conception of cosmic religion in the *Epinomis* differs from Plato's, see Tarán, 1975: 32–6.

[68] On pollution see Parker, 1983: 293 and 316–18; on oaths, *RE* s.v. Helios, cols. 59–60 (Jensen).

claiming that Helios was a 'glowing rock' and Selene, the moon, was 'earth' (*VS* 59 A 1 and 35; cf. Pl. *Ap.* 26d1–9).[69] Such charges were never levelled for attacks on 'merely' mythological deities.

In his later writings Plato, however, went beyond this strong 'respect' for the sun and proposed as deities not only him but the moon, stars, and planets as well. Helios was one of the major deities of the city his lawgiver founds in the *Laws*, and that deity has a sanctuary and all the accoutrements of a cultic deity,[70] and the celestial deities are a common topic of discussion in the *Timaeus* and *Laws*. Nilsson (1940) and Burkert (1985: 325–9) attribute this divinization of the celestial deities to a new interest in astronomy. I suspect two other factors, that such talk was becoming common in philosophical cosmological theory, as evidenced in the *Timaeus*,[71] and, secondly, that Plato may well have taken to heart, as he did so many of Socrates' statements, Socrates' claim that he believed the sun and moon to be deities.[72] Plato then developed in full the implications of this Socratic statement in accord with contemporary astronomical and cosmological theories. However Plato came to claim or accept the celestial bodies as deities, they become an important part of his theology, one of several features that distinguish his concept of

[69] D.L. 2.12–14. On the variant accounts of the charge against Anaxagoras and his trial, and on whether it is all fact or fiction, see Curd, 2007: 136; Parker, 1996: 208–9; Wallace, 1994: 136–8; Mansfeld, 1980; Dover, 1976: 27–34 = 1988: 138–42; and Derenne, 1930: 13–41.

[70] On Helios in the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 445–8. Dodds, 1951: 221 (cf. 223) points to the innovative character of the combined cult of Apollo and Helios in the *Laws*: 'This joint cult—in place of the expected cult of Zeus—expresses the union of old and new, Apollo standing for the traditionalism of the masses, and Helios for the new "natural religion" of the philosophers.'

[71] That is, we can assume that what Plato attributes to Timaeus are the types of view commonly being discussed at the time. Note also the parody of such views in Aristophanes' *Clouds*.

[72] When Meletus was charging that Socrates did not 'recognize the gods' at all, Plato has him answer in the *Apology* (26d1–3), 'Don't I believe that Helios and Selene are gods, as other men do?' Plato has here obviously chosen Helios and Selene to distance Socrates from the charges brought against Anaxagoras. Otherwise Socrates' response would be very odd for an Athenian wishing to demonstrate his worship of the city's gods. For the gods normally named in such a context, see [Arist.] *Ath.Pol.* 55.3. See Mikalson, 1989: 98. Plato has Socrates once pray to Helios after a night of meditation (*Smp.* 220d3–5). On this prayer, see Jackson, 1971: 16–17 and on prayers to Helios in general, Pulleyn, 1997: 157–8.

the gods from that of practised religion. Plato's assertion that the sun, moon, and other celestial bodies were gods found little acceptance among the later philosophers whom we study. Aristotle, Obbink (1988: 288 n. 23) claims, 'called the celestial bodies "(most) divine" out of larger classes of objects, but never explicitly attributes divinity to them or calls them gods'. Theophrastus sometimes appears to treat them as gods.[73] Epicurus denied that they were gods,[74] and the early Stoics did not consider them gods but viewed their orderly movements as one proof of the existence of rational god(s).[75]

Daimones

In the literary tradition gods are occasionally called *daimones*, and, also occasionally, when an individual suspects the intervention of a deity but does not know which one it may be, he may speak of it as a *daimon*.[76] Plato on a few occasions seemingly follows this practice, equating a *daimon* to a god or to 'some god'.[77] The usual two categories of deities in Greek practised religion are 'gods and heroes', as in *Republic* 2.378a2 and c5–6 and *Laws* 7.815d5–6. But in the *Republic* Plato introduces, idiosyncratically, a third category, *daimones*, to give a triad of gods, *daimones*, and heroes. There Socrates takes this classification of deities as a given, not requiring explanation, and to the triad he appends, as a separate group, the common dead (3.392a4–6 and 4.427b6–9). In the *Laws* Plato refers to the triad

[73] *On Piety* frag. 2.12–14 [Pötscher], Cicero *Nat. D.* 1.13.35, and Clem. Al., *Protr.* 5.66.5, and Obbink, 1988: 274.

[74] Frag. 342 [Usener].

[75] Zeno (*SVF* 1.165 = Cicero *Nat. D.* 1.14.36), however, attributed a 'vim divinam' to the stars, as to the years and months. On this see Algra, 2003: 166. For more on the Stoic views of these matters, see Ch. 6.

[76] On this practice and on *daimones* in tragedy, see Mikalson, 1991: 22–9. On *daimones* in Greek religion generally, see Burkert, 1985: 179–81 and Nilsson, 1967: 216–22, 739–40 and 1961: 301–2. On *daimones* in Plato, see Kidd, 1995; Burkert, 1985: 331–2; and Nilsson, 1961: 255–6. I am indebted also to Justin Carreker for permission to use parts of his unpublished study of *daimones* in Plato.

[77] *Daimon* = god: *Phdr.* 274c5–7, *Plt.* 271d6–7 and 272e6–8, and *Ti.* 40d6–e4. *Daimon* as 'some god': *Phdr.* 240a9–b1 and *Lg.* 9.877a2–b2. Such may also be the context of the *daimones* of *Ly.* 223a2. On *daimon* = god in the *Apology*, see pp. 25–6 below.

six times, without the addition of the dead.[78] Five times the lawgiver speaks also of only 'gods and *daimones*', leaving aside the heroes and the dead.[79] In eleven of these thirteen occurrences in the *Republic* and *Laws* Plato places his *daimones* in the context of cult, that is, of sanctuaries, temples, altars, statues, festivals, sacrifices, rituals, hymns, prayers, and/or 'other "services"'.[80] In *Laws* 10.906a6–7 Plato has his lawgiver make the powerful statement that 'gods and *daimones* are our allies, and we in turn are the property of gods and *daimones*'.[81]

Who were these *daimones* that Plato contrasts to gods and heroes? Plato offers three types of *daimones* that might serve as candidates. First are the *daimones*, one for each soul, that in the *Phaedo* attend individuals in life and guide them to the underworld. In the *Republic* similar *daimones* are both the fates individual souls choose for their next lives and entities that see to it that the reborn souls fulfil these chosen destinies in the new life.[82] In the *Timaeus* (90a2–c6) Plato has Timaeus describe a different kind of personal *daimon*, a type of soul given by god, located at the top of the body, that raises the individual up towards the sky, its origin, and keeps the body upright.[83] Second are the *daimones* that, on the model of the *daimones* of Hesiod's golden age (*Op.* 121–6), Plato in the *Republic* would, if Apollo of Delphi approves, make of soldiers killed in battle, those dead who have been in some other way exceptionally good in life, and deceased philosopher-kings. The tombs of the philosopher-kings are to be

[78] 4.717b2–4, 5.738d2, and 7.801e2–3 and 818c1–2. In 7.799a6–7 and 10.910a1 the heroes are described as 'children of the gods', for which see *Lg.* 9.853c4–5. Cf. *Rep.* 3.391b8–e2 and *Ap.* 27d8–28a2. For the distinction between those heroes who were children of the gods and those who were not, see [Pl.] *Hp.Ma.* 293a9–b9. The triad is also apparent in *Cra.* 397c4–398c6.

[79] 5.730a1, 740a7–b1, 8.828b2, 848d2, and 10.906a6–7. The pair, gods and *daimones*, appear also in *Rep.* 2.382e6, *Phdr.* 246e6, and *Cra.* 438c5, but not in a cult context.

[80] Only *Lg.* 7.818c1–2 and 10.906a6–7 are devoid of cult context.

[81] In the *Phaedo* (62b6–8) Socrates claims that humans are 'one of the possessions of the gods', with no reference to *daimones*.

[82] *Phd.* 107d5–e4 and 108a2–3 and b2–3; *Rep.* 10.617e1–2 and 620.d7–e1. Cf. *Lg.* 5.732c4–6. On these *daimones* in the *Republic* and their possible antecedents in Heraclitus (*VS* 22 B 119) and drama, see Adam, 1963, on *Rep.* 10.617de. On the 'personal *daimon*' see Kidd, 1995: 218 and 220–1.

[83] On this *daimon* as a metaphor for human 'rational capacity', see Kidd, 1995: 221. See also Sedley, 1999: 319–20.

'served' and become objects of worship (προσκυνήσομεν).[84] Hesiod's *daimones*, also idiosyncratic, were 'good, present on earth, protectors of mortals, and givers of good crops', and so may Plato be implying his deceased good men will be.[85] The first set, *daimones* as guides of the dead and enforcers of destiny, is, like the creation of the triad gods, *daimones*, and heroes, Plato's innovation, with no apparent link to contemporary Greek popular belief, and he gives no indication of cult. The second set, the war dead, good men who have died, and deceased philosopher-kings, has some similarities to some heroes of Greek cult,[86] and if Plato so conceives of them, he has momentarily abandoned the triad of gods, *daimones*, and heroes that he introduced earlier in the same dialogue.

We need, I think, to look elsewhere for the nature and origin of those *daimones* paired with the gods in Platonic theology. In the *Symposium* Socrates relates how the Diotima explained to him that Eros was not a god but a 'great *daimon*' (μέγας δαίμων), and Plato gives to her this description of the nature and activity of *daimones* (202d13–203a8):

> Everything *daimonic* is between god and mortal . . . It interprets and conveys things from humans to gods and things from gods to humans, that is, the requests and sacrifices of the humans and the orders and returns for sacrifices of the gods. Being between both it fills (the void) so that everything is bound together. Through the *daimonic* all divination proceeds and the craft of the priests who are concerned with sacrifices, rituals (τελεταί), chants, and all divination and sorcery. God does not mix with human, but through the *daimonic* is all association (ὁμιλία) and discussion for gods with humans, both when humans are awake and asleep . . . These *daimones* are numerous and of all kinds, and Eros is one of these.

These *daimones* thus served, by this account, as intermediaries between humans and Plato's gods, the means of cultic communication between them. Plato has also elsewhere *daimones* as second-tier deities serving as intermediates between god(s) and humans. In the

[84] *Rep.* 5.468e4–469b4 and 7.540b7–c2. Cf. *Cra.* 397d9–398c4. On other antecedents for the dead as *daimones*, see Kidd, 1995: 219.

[85] On Hesiod's *daimones*, see West, 1978: 182–3.

[86] On these *daimones* of the dead and their relationship to conventional Greek hero cult, see Reverdin, 1945: 131–8 and 149–67.

Politicus (271c8–e8), at the instruction of god ('the greatest *daimon*', 272e7), they act as shepherds over all mortal creatures. In the *Laws* (4.713c5–e6) Plato's lawgiver describes how Cronus established divine *daimones* to rule humans, regulate their society, and bring them the benefits of a golden age. But the very notion here and in the *Symposium* and *Politicus* of a *daimon* as an intermediary between god(s) and humans is completely alien to popular belief, and that is the fundamental point to be kept in mind in the following pages of this book.

The question is not immediately relevant to our purposes, but interesting, as to why Plato created such intermediaries and called them *daimones*. The answer, I think, lies ultimately in Socrates' personal *daimonion*. In Chapter 3 we discuss Socrates' *daimonion*, that divinatory voice, unique to Socrates, that warned him off from actions that would be harmful to him. Both it and the role it played in Socrates' life and trial may have led Plato to ponder the nature of *daimones* and eventually to create a new role for them in his theology. In the case against Socrates, Meletus charged, among other things, that Socrates did not 'recognize the gods' whom the city did but was introducing other, newly invented *daimonia*.[87] One would expect the second part of this charge to be that he was 'introducing other, newly invented *gods*',[88] but for 'gods' Meletus chose the very unusual *daimonia*, clearly in the attempt to insinuate into the accusation Socrates' own *daimonion*, as both Plato (*Euthphr.* 3b1–7) and Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.1.2 and *Ap.* 10–14) recognized. Socrates chose to respond to the charge in the terms that Meletus presented it, that is, in terms of both 'gods' and '*daimones*' (26e6–28a2). In his argument that eventually shows Meletus to be contradicting himself by claiming that Socrates both does and does not believe in gods, Socrates claims that *daimones* are either gods or heroes (27c10–d1). Explicitly and by the flow of the argument the *daimones* of the *Apology* are not a separate group, distinct from gods and heroes.[89] But already in the *Apology* Plato was drawn into the world of *daimones*, through Socrates' own

[87] For the sources, see pp. 114–15.

[88] On this see Versnel, 1990: 125–7 and Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 34–6.

[89] Nor, in the context of the preceding argument, does the mention of '*daimones*, gods, and heroes' in 28a1 make them into the hierarchical triad of gods, *daimones*, and heroes of the *Republic*.

daimonion. Socrates believed in his *daimonion* and viewed it as an intermediary between himself and the gods in matters of divination (Ch. 3), and two of his comments on the *daimonic* from the *Apology* resonate. 'Is there anyone who believes that there are *daimonic* activities but does not believe *daimones* exist?' (27c1–2), and, 'If I "recognize" *daimonia*, it is, I suppose, very necessary that I "recognize" also *daimones*' (27c8–9). It is, I propose, Socrates' own *daimonion*, whose role and functioning Plato sought to understand in theological terms, and then such statements as the above that Plato attributed to Socrates that led him eventually to create a separate class of deities, *daimones*, inferior to gods, superior to heroes, but unrelated to the traditional deities of Greek practised religion.[90]

The *daimones* of Plato provided the impetus for some, but certainly not all, of his successors to develop their own demonologies. There is no trace of such *daimones* as intermediaries in Aristotle,[91] Theophrastus, Zeno, or Epicurus. The Stoic Chrysippus may have entertained *daimones* both of the personal 'genius' type and those thought to be greater than humans but less divine than gods.[92] But the author of the *Epinomis* and Xenocrates, head of the Academy from 339 to 314 BCE, developed and remodelled Plato's demonology in ways that would have a great influence on later Greek philosophy and on the Church Fathers.[93] From the convoluted and complex description in the *Epinomis*, it appears the author claimed that the outer cosmos, Uranus, is the god of first rank, and second to him are the seven planets. Third in rank are *daimones*, invisible creatures composed of body and soul who are all good and who love and help good men and hate evil ones. Like the *daimones* of Plato's

[90] This is not to claim that Plato himself treated Socrates' *daimonion* as a *daimon* of the types he employs elsewhere. On this see Joyal, 2000: 73–103. For the lack of cults of *daimones*, see Burkert, 1985: 180.

[91] For the *daimonic* character of dreams in Aristotle, see p. 123.

[92] Personal genius: *SVF* 3.4 = D.L. 7.88. See Rist, 1969: 261–4. 'Greater than human': *SVF* 2.1103 = Plut. *Mor.* 360e and 2.1104 = *Mor.* 419a. On the *daimones* of Chrysippus, see also Algra, 2003: 171–2 n. 50 and Nilsson, 1961: 259–60. Aristotle's statement in the *Topics* (2.112a36–8) that the soul is 'each man's *daimon*' may well be a continuation or explanation of Xenocrates' preceding statement rather than his own view.

[93] Brief summaries of which may be found in Kidd, 1995: 221–4 and Nilsson, 1961: 255–7.

Symposium, they are intermediaries between gods and humans and are responsible for religious phenomena such as divination. Xenocrates proposes some quite different gods,[94] but his *daimones* are similar, except that they are composed of soul only and are explicitly located between the moon and earth. Some of his *daimones* are good, some evil.[95] It was with such sublunar evil *daimones* that some of the Church Fathers identified the Greek gods, ironically so, since Greek practised religion did not have cults of *daimones*.

In the following pages I discuss first (Ch. 1) philosophical definitions and descriptions of the 'service to the gods' itself: what it is, what its components are, and what rewards are expected from it. From this preliminary survey two somewhat distinct aspects of the inquiry emerge: first, the cultic acts such as prayers, sacrifices, festivals, and dedications that the philosophical tradition includes under the rubric 'service to the gods'; second, the two religious concepts that are, as it were, subdivisions of 'service to the gods', and they are 'proper respect' (εὐσέβεια) for the gods and 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης). In Chapter 2 I treat the prayers, sacrifices, festivals, dedications, and the cult personnel involved in 'service to the gods': how the philosophers described them, how they criticized and reformed them, and how they employed them in the ideal cities they fashion. Divination was, even in most of the philosophical tradition, treated as one of the greatest rewards from 'service to gods', and in Chapter 3 we examine how philosophers judged and employed the various forms of divination and how it is viewed by most of them as a major determinant of the components of that 'service to the gods'. 'Proper respect' for the gods and 'religious correctness' have tended to be treated as synonymous in the scholarly tradition of both Greek religion and Greek philosophy, and in Chapter 4 we examine the philosophers' views of both 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness'—how they are similar and distinct, which acts fall into each category, and what are their causes and what rewards accrue from them. When I began this study, I imagined that it would focus on 'proper respect', but I found that, in fact, 'religious correctness' plays

[94] On the gods of Xenocrates, see Baltes, 1988.

[95] *Epinomis* 984d8–985d4; Xenocrates, frags. 213, 222–3, and 225–30 [IP]. See Tarán, 1975: 152 and 283–91, to which my schematic summary is much indebted.

much the greater role in the philosophical tradition. Plato, of course, makes his gods perfectly good and perfectly just, and in Chapter 5 we investigate how the philosophical tradition relates 'religious correctness' to justice, both the justice of humans and the justice of gods. In Chapter 6 we take up the large question of the gods' attitude towards human beings, and through a variety of approaches we hope to demonstrate that, with a few exceptions, in the philosophical tradition the gods are consistently viewed as benevolent towards human beings and active agents for their betterment. At the close of that chapter we correlate this view of benevolent gods with that apparent in the sources for popular conceptions of the Greek gods of cult.

1

'Service to the Gods'

'What other species than humans "serves" gods?' So Xenophon in his *Memorabilia* has Socrates ask.[1] The answer, 'None', is assumed (1.4.13). In the same book Xenophon claims that Socrates, far from 'not recognizing the gods' (*μὴ νομίζειν θεούς*), 'especially of all men was seen "serving" the gods' (1.2.64). Scholars virtually unanimously repeat the claim that the Greeks had no single word for 'religion', and that is correct. The Greeks did have, however, a brief phrase, *θεραπεία τῶν θεῶν* ('service to the gods') to designate 'religion' if we take 'religion' to be the 'proper respect' for the gods and the proper performance of all the activities directed or of concern to them.[2] The fullest discussion of 'service to the gods' is to be found in Plato's *Euthyphro*, and we begin our discussion with a series of propositions made concerning it in that dialogue. All the propositions are made or accepted by Euthyphro; some are proposed by Socrates and some of these well might have been acceptable to him even though he is dissatisfied with the conclusion of the discussion.[3]

1. Justice has two parts: one involves 'proper respect' (*εὐσεβές*) and 'religious correctness' (*ὅσιον*), that is, the part concerning the 'service to the gods'; the remaining part of justice concerns the 'service' to human beings. (12e6–9)

[1] *Τί δὲ φῦλον ἄλλο ἢ ἄνθρωποι θεοὺς θεραπεύουσι*; Cf. Pl. *Prt.* 322a3–4, *Menex.* 237d6–e1, and *Lg.* 10.902b4–6. On *θεραπεία θεῶν* see Burkert, 1985: 273 and Mikalson, 1991: 200.

[2] For the less common *ὑπηρεσία τῶν θεῶν* and *λατρεία τῶν θεῶν* being the equivalents of *θεραπεία τῶν θεῶν*, see pp. 9–10.

[3] On this see McPherran, 1996: 45–51, 71 and Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 91–6.

2. 'Religious correctness' (ὁσιότης) and 'proper respect' (εὐσέβεια) are 'service to the gods'. (13b4–6)
3. The 'service to the gods' is the 'service' that slaves give their masters, a 'subordinate's service' (ὑπηρετικὴ θεραπεία). (13d5–8)
4. If someone knows how in prayer to say and in sacrifice to do things that bring *charis*[4] to the gods, these things are 'religiously correct', and such things preserve private households and the common affairs of cities. The opposites of these things that bring *charis* all do not 'show proper respect', and they overturn and destroy all things. (14b2–7)
5. 'Subordinate's service' to the gods is to make requests of them correctly and to give them gifts correctly. (14d6–e2)
6. 'Religious correctness' then would be for gods and men a commercial craft (τέχνη ἐμπορική) with one another. (14e6–8)
7. From this commercial craft (that is, from 'religious correctness'), the gods receive as benefits honour (τιμή), gifts betokening honour (γέρα), and *charis*. (15a6–11)
8. What is 'religiously correct' is 'dear' (φίλον) to the gods. (15b1–6)

As we examine these propositions in the *Euthyphro*, we must note that θεραπεία τῶν θεῶν, or 'service to the gods', is a concept familiar to even if not frequently expressed by Hesiod, Herodotus, tragedians, and the orators,[5] and we can thus be confident that it is not merely a theoretical construct of philosophical theology. What we have in this passage of the *Euthyphro* is the interplay of statements of conventional religious views of 'service to the gods' and of philosophical attempts to define better and question those popular views.[6]

[4] On nature of *charis*, see pp. 14–15 and 206–7.

[5] e.g. Hes. *Op.* 135; Hdt. 2.37.2; Eur. *El* 744, *Ion* 111 and 187, *Ba.* 82, and *IT* 1105; Lysias 6.51; and Isocrates 11.24. For more examples, see Mikalson, 1991: 297 n. 228.

[6] Furley, 1985 properly re-established (against Burnet, 1924: 5–7) Euthyphro as 'a rigid adherent to traditional mores', 'a high-priest of the conventional dogma', and, if not 'representative of the average Athenian', a 'religious pedant'. Parker, 1998: 121 terms him 'a representative of conventional piety'. See also Geach, 2005: 24; Bailly, 2003: 21; and Emlyn-Jones, 1991: 10–11. On Euthyphro's unconventional views regarding the prosecution of his own father for murder, see Edwards, 2000. For a revival of Burnet's views of Euthyphro and the suggestion that he may have been the author of the Derveni Papyrus, see Kahn, 1997*a*. This suggestion has generally not been accepted (Betegh, 2004: 64).

By consolidating the eight propositions, we can develop this brief, preliminary description of the 'service to the gods': 'Service to the gods' is 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect for the deities'. It is to make requests of them, that is, to pray to them, correctly and to give them gifts, that is, to sacrifice, correctly. Correctly done, these cultic acts are 'dear' to the gods and generate *charis* in them and preserve private households and cities. Wrongly done, they do not show 'proper respect' and overthrow and destroy all things. From 'religious correctness' on the part of humans the gods receive honour, gifts betokening honour, and *charis*. The 'service to the gods' is like the service slaves give their masters, and, finally, it is one part of justice, that part which concerns the gods contrasted to that part of justice which concerns humans.

COMPONENTS OF THE 'SERVICE TO THE GODS'

The gods whom one is 'to serve' are usually undefined, just 'the gods'.[7] In his discussion of marriage in the *Laws*, Plato's lawgiver asserts that newly formed, nuclear families are to 'serve the gods' in accordance with laws/traditions (6.776a7–b4) and are to leave behind grandchildren to be 'servants' (ὑπηρέτας) for the gods (773e5–774a1). The gods may also be a special group such as 'the gods of the family and city' (Pl. *Lg.* 5.740b8–c2) and the gods who oversee childbirth (Arist. *Pol.* 7.1335b15–16). Individual gods also appear. Plato has Socrates claim that 'no greater good has yet occurred in the city for (the Athenians) than my "subordinate's service" (ὑπηρεσίαν) to Apollo' (*Ap.* 30a5–7).[8] So, too, Plato has humans as 'servants' of Ares and of Eros in the more mythical and playful passages of the *Phaedrus* (252c4–5) and *Symposium* (196c1–2). The citizens of the *Laws* are to 'serve' the homeland since she is a goddess, and

[7] Above, Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.13; Pl. *Euthphr.* 12e6–8, 13b4–d2, *Phd.* 62d1–5. See also Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.28, *Oec.* 5.20; Pl. *Rep.* 4.443a9–10, *Lg.* 4.715c2–4, and [Pl.] *Def.* 412e14–413a2; Arist. *Pol.* 7.1329a31–2; and Zeno, D.L. 7.119. That gods might 'serve' humans is raised sarcastically in Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.9.

[8] Cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 7.2.15.

they are to think about her as they do about the local gods and *daimones* (5.740a5–b1). Heroes, too, have their 'service' (Arist. *Mund.* 400b23), and in the *Republic* (5.469a8–b1) the tombs of the guardians are to be 'served' as if the guardians were *daimones*.

In his *Symposium* (4.48–9) Xenophon has Hermogenes boast that he is so 'dear' (φίλοι) to the gods that they regularly send him good omens and indications of the future. 'How', Socrates asks, 'do you "serve" (θεραπεύων) them to be so "dear" to them?' Hermogenes responds, 'I praise them, spending no money, and I give back to them some of what they give me, and I maintain "good speech" (εὐφημῶ) so far as I can, and I willingly commit no deception in matters in which I make them witnesses.'

Plato's lawgiver speaks of the good man's sacrifices, prayers, dedications, and 'all the "service" to the gods' (*Lg.* 4.716d6–7; cf. *Rep.* 2.362c1–4). If we combine the two lists we have as initial components of 'service to the gods' prayers, sacrifices, dedications (both as first-fruits and others), good speech in relation to the gods, and the upholding of oaths. To these we may add other related 'services' such as 'service' to things belonging to the gods (τὰ ἱερά), that is, sanctuaries and, presumably, objects (Pl. *Lg.* 9.878a6–7 and *Ep.* 8.356b2–3). *Manteis* (soothsayers) are 'servants' (ὑπηρέται) of the prophesying god (*Ion* 534c5–d4), and the city is 'to serve' (ὑπηρετοῦσα) the oracles of Apollo (*Lg.* 11.914a2–5).[9] All these components of the 'service to the gods' contain fundamental practices and beliefs of contemporary Greek religion, and in the following chapters we discuss the treatment of each in the Greek philosophical tradition.

THE SERVER AND THE SERVED

Since the focus in this chapter is on 'service to gods', we must investigate the relationship of the 'server' to the 'served', that is of the human to the god. Is the server, as Euthyphro claims, commonly portrayed as a slave in

[9] As a sidelight, Socrates in [Plato]'s *Alcibiades* 1 has the four pedagogues of the Persian king 'serve' the gods by teaching the king the 'magic' (μαγείαν) of Zoroaster (121e5–122a2). For the instruction probably being in magic, not in the 'theology of the *magoi*', see Denyer, 2001: 180.

service to the god? *Θεραπεία* and its cognates are used most commonly of physicians treating patients, children serving parents, humans tending animals, slaves serving masters, and, as we have seen, of humans serving gods.[10] In the context of human 'serving god', the 'service' is clearly that of an inferior to a superior, as the term *θεραπεία* might suggest and as the phrase *ὑπηρετικὴ θεραπεία* in the *Euthyphro* and elsewhere makes absolutely clear. The 'service' paid by humans to gods seems to be put into one of three analogies: that, as by Euthyphro, of slaves to masters; that, mostly in Aristotle, of subjects to kings; and, most commonly, that of children to parents. Let us treat each in turn.

Euthyphro's claim that 'the service to the gods' is a service 'which slaves give their masters' might seem natural but in fact it is quite exceptional in the philosophical tradition.[11] Only in the *Phaedo* does Plato have Socrates speak persistently of the gods as 'masters' (*δεσπόται*), a designation that develops logically from Socrates' prior description of human beings as 'one of the possessions of the gods' (62b6–8). Slaves are the possessions of their masters, and, as Socrates puts it, humans are in 'service' (*θεραπεία*) to the very best overseers, that is, the gods. These divine overseers are then termed 'masters', and it is argued that a wise man would not flee serving a master better than himself but would wish to remain with him always (62c9–63a10). This leads, in turn, to Socrates' description of the gods he expects to find in the underworld as 'very good masters' (63c2–3; cf. 69e1–3).[12] Later in the *Phaedo* Socrates imagines swans as the

[10] Some examples from Plato alone: doctors treating patients, *Plt.* 293b8–c1, 295c2, 298e3, *Chrm.* 156b8 and c5, 157a1–3, b3–4, *Prt.* 345a4, 354a5, *Grg.* 464b6, c4, 501a1, 517e3 and 6, *Rep.* 1.341c6–9, 2.369d9, 3.407e1–2, 408b4, e2–5, 410a1, *Lg.* 3.684c4, 4.720a3 and 6, d2, 9.865b3, 10.902d2; children serving parents, *Men.* 91a4–5, *Rep.* 4.425b2–3, 5.467a2, *Lg.* 5.740a5 and c1, 10.886c7, 11.931a8 and e2; humans tending animals, *Grg.* 516e5, *Rep.* 1.343b3, *Lg.* 5.735b3 and 6; slaves serving masters, *Smp.* 175c1, *Rep.* 9.579a3, *Lg.* 1.633c2, 7.808a4, 11.915a3–4 and [Pl.] *Alc.* 1.122c2.

[11] As in the literary tradition. For tragedy, see Mikalson, 1991: 200, 297 n. 228, and 298 n. 233.

[12] At another level, again in the *Phaedo*, Socrates argues that 'nature' assigns to the soul 'to rule and be master' (*δεσπόζειν*) and to the body 'to be the slave (*δουλεύειν*) and to be ruled'. In this the soul is similar to the divine and the body is similar to the mortal (79e9–80a9). By analogy one can conclude that the mortal should as a slave obey the divine as its master. In *Lg.* 5.726a2–727a2 it is argued that the soul is 'the most godly (*θειότατον*) of our possessions', but still second in this to the gods. The soul, therefore, must be honoured as a master more than our slavish possessions, but less so than the gods who are masters (*δεσπόται*).

servants (θεράποντες) of Apollo and that they sing most beautifully before death because they are about to go to their master. Since they have prophetic skills from Apollo, they foreknow the good things in Hades and feel greater pleasure at the time of death than at any other time. So Socrates, given his situation on this day, believes himself a 'fellow slave' (ὁμόδουλος) of the swans and the 'sacred property' of the same god Apollo (ἱερὸς τοῦ αὐτοῦ θεοῦ), with similar prophetic knowledge of the good things in Hades and equal good spirits in the face of death (84e3–85b7). Socrates' conception in the *Phaedo* of god as master and human as slave follows from the initial proposition that man is property of the gods, and this development of it is peculiar to Socrates and unique in the early philosophical tradition.[13] It is, of course, related to Socrates' conception of his divinely inspired mission and his service to that, a topic we treat in more detail in Chapter 3. Here it must be noted that, despite the statement in the *Euthyphro* and its prominence in the *Phaedo*, the conception of god as master and human as slave, or, more precisely, of god as a good master and human as a good slave, is but one, and the least common, analogy of gods' relationship to humans in the philosophical tradition.

If gods are likened to kings, as Aristotle (*Politics* 1.1252b24–7) claims they were, we may see a second analogy of 'human server' to 'divine served' in that of a 'subject' to a 'king'. I have previously proposed this analogy, the strongest support for which lies in the honour and its causes that both kings and gods enjoy. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle claims that honour (τιμή) is the prize (γέρας) for virtue and benefactions (εὐεργεσίας), and that 'the one who provides no good to the community is not held in honour, because a

[13] For humans as 'possessions' of the gods and *daimones*, see also *Critias* 109b6–7 and *Lg.* 10.906a6–7. In 10.902b8–c2 all living creatures, including the sky, are gods' possessions and therefore objects of their concern. In *Euthd.* 302d4–6 Apollo, Zeus, and Athena are termed, in an Athenian context, 'ancestors and δεσπόται', and in *Lg.* 7.796b6 Athena is δέσποινα. These are honorific, cult-type titles and do not imply servitude of their devotees. Cf. *Phdr.* 273e8–274a2.

At *Lg.* 6.762e1–7 'slavery to the laws' is equated to 'slavery to the gods' (τοῖς θεοῖς οὖσαν δουλείαν).

Finally, Plato has Parmenides claim (*Prm.* 133d7–134e6) that, because gods deal in absolutes and humans do not, gods exercise perfect, absolute 'mastership' and 'knowledge', unrelated to their human counterparts, and hence gods could not be 'masters' (δεσπόται) of humans.

communal thing is given to the one who benefits the community, and honour is that communal thing' (8.1163b3–8). We have seen in *Euthyphro* 15a6–11 above, proposition 7, that τιμή and γέρα are just those benefits that accrue to gods. In the *Politics* Aristotle has, among the various types of rulers, kings in particular rewarded with τιμή: 'Of gains those of money are tyrannical, those referring to τιμή are more kingly' (5.1311a5–7). The kingship itself is a τιμή—as both 'honour' and 'office'—and according to Aristotle 'it is based on worth, either private virtue or family, or on benefactions, or on these things and ability. For all who have benefited or were able to benefit their cities and peoples attained this τιμή' (5.1310b33–6). The king, like a god, benefits his subjects and receives for that τιμή, both as his 'office' and as 'honour'. A very similar nexus of a god's and a king's τιμή in tragedy led me to formulate the analogy in this way:

> The king has an office and functions (τιμή), and for this he is honored, usually by the freely given gifts of his subjects. In these he delights and takes pleasure, and in return he helps those who honor him. Deprived of the honor due him, the king may become angry, punish his rebellious subjects, and reassert his authority, but that is a perversion of the proper relationship. So, too, a god has τιμή as a function, a τιμή which the god is concerned to maintain. For this the god expects from humans τιμή as honor and worship, and this τιμή is to be rendered in sacrifice and other cult acts. Like a king, a god is justifiably angered when his τιμή as function is not respected, when the τιμή owed him is not given, and he punishes the rebel. (Mikalson, 1991: 197)[14]

Both sides of the analogy are, though not explicitly, embedded in the *charis* relationship, both when it is functioning properly and when it is not.[15]

[14] Cf. Mikalson, 2005: 23. Dover, 1972: 32 formulated much the same analogy, speaking of 'ruler' instead of 'king': 'The Greek's relation with one of his gods was essentially the relation between subject and ruler. A ruler is a person whose actions and decisions cannot always be predicted or explained by his subjects; he can be placated, in normal times by normal tribute; he makes rules—which he himself does not necessarily obey—and punishes subjects who break the rules; but he does not concern himself with what lies outside the province of his rules, and a prudent subject will pay his tribute, obey the rules, and keep out of the ruler's way.'

[15] On Aristotle's claim (*EN* 8.1158b33–1159a8) of the impossibility of a φιλία relationship equally between gods and their worshippers and kings and their subjects, see discussion of gods and φιλία in Ch. 4.

The analogy of children serving parents to humans serving gods is, in contrast to that of slaves/masters, widespread in both philosophy and literature, and, in contrast to subjects/kings, is explicitly stated. It is also expressed in the same language: of 'service', *charis*, and honour. We discuss this and aspects of the religious side of the child/parent relationship in more detail in Chapter 4 and here offer only some examples to illustrate the analogy. In Plato's *Laws* the lawgiver requires that families leave behind a male heir as a 'server' (θεραπεύτην) of the gods of the family and city *and* of those still living and those who have died (5.740b8–c2; cf. 6.773e5–774a1 and 9.878a6–7). By those 'still living' he means 'parents' and by the dead 'ancestors' (προγόνοι), and only the former are of concern now.[16]

In *Memorabilia* 2.2.13–14 Xenophon has Socrates ask his son Lamprocles,

> Do you not think it is necessary to 'serve' (θεραπεύειν) the mother who loves you most of all? Do you not know that the city is concerned with and brings to court no other lack of *charis*? It overlooks those who, treated well, do not return *charis*, but if someone does not 'serve' his parents, it brings him to court and rejects him in the scrutiny and does not allow him to be an *archon*, because, if he were sacrificing, the sacrifices would not be made with the 'proper respect' (for the gods) and he would not do anything else well or justly. . . . If you have 'sound thoughts' (σωφρονῆς), you will ask that the gods forgive you if you have committed some wrong against your mother, lest they think you lack a sense of *charis* and will not be willing to do good things for you.

The 'service' owed parents is in terms not of affection but of the *charis* owed in return for goods received, as with the gods. In another discussion of *charis* Xenophon's Socrates makes the point more explicitly: 'Who might be done greater goods than children by their parents? The parents brought them into existence and made them see such beautiful things and share in such good things as the gods provide to humans' (*Mem.* 2.2.3). And for that parents deserve

[16] See England, 1921, on 5.740c1. Cf. 4.724a1–2. On 'service' owed to parents, see also Pl. *Rep.* 4.425b1–3 and 5.467a1–2 and *Lg.* 5.740a5–6, and Morrow, 1960: 467–8. On 'service' owed to dead ancestors, Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.1 and 2.2.13 and Pl. *Rep.* 4.427b7–9, *Lg.* 4.723e4–5, and Morrow, 1960: 461–7.

charis. Thus children are to 'serve' their parents as humans do gods, in the context of *charis*, in return for goods received.[17]

We have seen honour associated with 'service to the gods', and so, too, is it with 'service' to parents. 'Honour', Aristotle claims, 'must be given to parents just as to gods' (*EN* 9.1165a24),[18] but in the honours paid to parents, like those to gods, 'no one might ever pay back their value, but the person "serving" (ὁ θεραπεύων) to the limit of his means seems to be a decent (ἐπιεικής) man' (8.1163b15–18).[19] Plato's lawgiver claims that what he has said about the 'service to the gods' is relevant also to the honours and dishonours of parents (*Lg.* 11.930e4–6), and that the gods heed a parent's prayer about his children, for their benefit if he is honoured, for their harm if he is not (11.931b5–e9). Parents are not gods, but honouring or dishonouring them brings much the same results as honouring or dishonouring the gods.

When Socrates in a discussion of the unwritten laws asks whether it is not the law/custom among all humans to respect (σέβειν) gods, Hippias responds, 'Is it not the custom everywhere to honour parents?' And Socrates agrees that it is (*Mem.* 4.4.19–20). The distinction here is between 'proper respect' (σέβειν or εὐσεβεῖν) for the gods and honour for parents, and it seems that in the philosophical tradition 'service', *charis*, and honours are shared among gods and parents, but εὐσέβεια is largely reserved for the gods.[20]

Children, Aristotle claims (*EN* 9.1162a4–7), have 'affection' (φιλία) for their parents as humans do for gods, as towards those 'good and superior'.[21] They do so 'because [their parents] have done

[17] Cf. Pl. *Lg.* 4.717b5–d6 and Arist. *EE* 7.1242a32–5.

[18] Cf. Pl. *Rep.* 3.386a2–3.

[19] Cf. *EN* 9.1164b2–6. For the link of 'service' and honour of parents, see also Pl. *Lg.* 4.723e4–5 and 10.886c6–7.

[20] Cf. Pl. *Lg.* 4.717a6–b6 where gods enjoy both τιμαί and εὐσέβεια, the parents only τιμαί. Note the distinction οὔτε ἀνθρώπους αἰδούμενος οὔτε θεοὺς σεβόμενος in 11.917b3–4. The distinction is most clearly stated in Lycurgus, *Leoc.* 15, πρός τε τοὺς θεοὺς εὐσεβῶς καὶ πρὸς τοὺς γονέας ὁσίως, and is clearly reflected in Gorgias' Funeral Oration, *VS* 82 B 6: σεμνοὶ μὲν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς τῷ δικαίῳ, ὅσιοι δὲ πρὸς τοὺς τοκέας τῇ θεραπείᾳ. For exceptional cases of 'proper respect' (εὐσέβεια) directed towards parents, occurring only when parents are paired with gods, see Pl. *Rep.* 10.615c2–3 and *Smp.* 188c2–6.

[21] Dirlmeier, 1991: 530 views this as not Aristotle's view but as a 'Gebote der Volksmoral'.

well the most important matters. For they are the cause of their existing, of their being raised, and when born of their being educated.' Among the acts of those who are 'religiously correct' (τοῖς ὁσίοις), according to Plato's lawgiver (*Lg.* 4.717b5–d3), are the honours of living parents. Parents deserve such honours,[22]

> because it is right (θέμις) for one owing one's first and greatest debts, the most important of all debts, to pay them back and to think that whatever he possesses and has all belong to those who begot and raised him. He is to provide these things in 'subordinate's service' (ὑπηρεσίαν) to his parents to the utmost of his ability, beginning with property, secondly the things of the body, and thirdly the things of the soul. He is paying back as loans the cares and attention and the long ago labours of those labouring very hard, all given on loan for the young, and he is giving them back to very old people who very much need them in old age. Through his whole life he must especially have had and maintain good speech (εὐφημίαν) towards his parents because there is a very heavy punishment for light and flighty words.[23] Nemesis, the messenger of Justice, has been assigned as an overseer over all such matters.

The relationship of parent to child does not, apparently, require a return of affection but concerns quite specifically the proper 'service' for the many good things the child has received from the parents. It is analogous to the *charis* owed to the gods for their gifts, and it is expressed, as we have seen, in the same terms of 'service' and honours. The relationship of children to parent is thus analogous to that of humans to god, but not identical. As Aristotle notes (*EN* 9.1165a24–7), different honours are owed in different relationships, and the honours and 'service' owed to parents and gods are different. Also, when gods are mistreated in the *charis* relationship, they act directly. When parents suffer the same, they turn to the gods for recompense. Despite this, and keeping in mind that the fundamental issue is 'service' for goods rendered, we may see in the child to parent relationship the closest and most widely used analogy of the human server to the divine served.

[22] On 'religious correctness' as it concerns parents, see Ch. 4.
[23] On εὐφημία in relation to the gods, see Ch. 2.

'SERVICE TO THE GODS' AS A COMMERCIAL CRAFT

If the predominate analogy of human server to divine served is the child to the parent, it calls into question Socrates' labelling of 'service to the gods' in the *Euthyphro* as 'commercial', that is, as between a buyer and seller (14e6–7). This characterization of the 'service to the gods' is apparently neither Socrates' nor Euthyphro's own view. Socrates expresses it only as a conclusion drawn from how Euthyphro describes 'service to the gods', and Euthyphro assents to the label only reluctantly.[24] The explicit description of 'service to the gods' as a commercial craft is also unique to the *Euthyphro*.[25] In the *Eudemian Ethics* Aristotle contrasts the relationship between god and men to that between sellers, lenders, and their clients. Aristotle's god is content receiving the sacrifices which his worshippers have the means to make.[26] The seller and lender will not accept the client's claim of not having the means to pay what is owed (7.1243b11–14). So, too, in the coin of honour. As we have seen, Aristotle claims that 'honour must be given to parents just as to gods' (*EN* 9.1165a24), but in the honours paid to parents, like those to gods, no one can pay full worth (8.1163b15–17). In the *Memorabilia* (4.3.15) Xenophon has Euthydemus dispirited because no human can return to the gods *charis* worthy of their benefactions. It is in the human's inability, just as the child's, to pay 'full worth'—in sacrifices or honour or *charis*—to the gods for the great benefits received that the idea of 'service to the gods' being a commercial exchange between men and gods breaks down. We do far better to return to the *charis* relationship, in which there is a mutual exchange of pleasing favours, wherein these favours may be very different in nature, scale, and financial value.

[24] I owe these observations to Andrew S. Mason.

[25] For less explicit descriptions of it as such, and for the importance of *charis* in understanding the correct relationship, see Parker, 1998: 118–21; Yunis, 1988*a*: 101–2. Cf. Mikalson, 2005: 26–7.

[26] Cf. *EN* 9.1164b4–6.

BENEFITS FROM 'SERVICE TO THE GODS'

Many benefits accrue to humans from performing individual components of the 'service to the gods', as we shall see later, but some are explicitly associated with that 'service' itself. Xenophon has two statements of this in the *Oeconomicus*, the first by Ischomachus to Socrates (11.7–8):

> I will describe to you what practices I try to spend my life performing, so far as I can. Since I seem to have learned that the gods have made it not right (θεμιτόν) for men to succeed without knowing what they must do and taking care that these things be done, and to some of those who are wise and taking this care they grant to be *eudaimones*, but others not, so I begin by 'serving the gods', and I try to do as is right for me when I am praying to find health, strength of body, honour in the city, goodwill among my friends, honourable safety in war, and wealth that increases in a good way.

In 5.19–6.1 Socrates himself tells Critobulus:

> I thought that you knew, Critobulus, that the gods are no less in authority over the tasks in agriculture than over those in war. You see that those engaged in war, before their war activities, please (ἐξαρεσκομένους) the gods and ask them by sacrifices and omens what they must and must not do. Do you think it is less necessary to make the gods propitious (ἱλάσκεσθαι) concerning agricultural activities? For you know well that people with 'sound thoughts' (σώφρονες) 'serve' (θεραπεύουσιν) the gods also for the sake of wet and dry crops, cattle, horses, sheep, and all their possessions.[27]
>
> And Critobulus answered: I think you are right when you order me to try to begin every task with the gods, because they are in no less authority over the tasks of peace than those of war.

It is a sign of 'sound thinking' (σωφροσύνη) 'to serve the gods', and that 'service' includes 'pleasing them' and 'making them propitious'. Xenophon has Socrates describe Virtue's warning to Heracles, 'If you wish the gods to be propitious (ἵλεως) to you, you must "serve" (θεραπευτέον) them' (*Mem.* 2.1.28). Such 'propitiousness' (ἱλαότης), though not limited to the gods,[28] is particularly associated with them

[27] On *sophrosyne* as 'sound thinking', see pp. 12–13.

[28] Of the dead, Pl. *Rep.* 4.427b6–8; of living philosophers, 6.496e1–3.

(Pl. *Euthd.* 273e5–274a1).[29] Gods are made propitious by sacrifices, prayers, song, dance, and statues.[30] 'Served' and propitious, the gods assist in divination[31] and, as we see in the passages from the *Oeconomicus* above, in health, bodily strength, honour in the city, goodwill of friends, safety in war, acquisition of wealth, and success in agriculture. And Ischomachus and Critobulus take all this to mean that they should begin with the gods. Those who 'serve' the gods are also 'dear' to them (*φίλοι*, Xen. *Smp.* 4.49, above and *θεοφιλεῖς*, Pl. *Rep.* 2.362c1–6). Plato's lawgiver offers an excellent conclusion to this summary of the benefits of the 'service to the gods' in a statement that he considers 'the finest and truest of all statements', that 'for the good person to sacrifice and associate always with the gods by means of prayers, dedications, and all the "service to the gods" (*θεραπείᾳ θεῶν*) is the finest, best, and most useful thing for the *eudaimon* life' (*Lg.* 4.716d5–e1).[32] The *eudaimon* life was certainly described differently by the different philosophers, but Aristotle claims that both 'the many' (*οἱ πολλοί*) of Greeks and the sophisticated ones, that is, the philosophers, assume that *eudaimonia* is 'living well' and 'faring well' and is pleasurable. 'The many', however, in distinction from the philosophers, include more obvious things drawn from their own lives, such as health, wealth, and honour.[33]

We may now fill out and correct our preliminary description of the 'service to the gods' drawn from Plato's *Euthyphro*. 'Service to the gods' is 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect' for the deities. It is to pray, sacrifice, and make dedications correctly, and to begin every task with the gods. To perform this 'service' is a matter of 'sound

[29] Cf. Pl. *Lg.* 7.792d2–5. On the odd extension of *ἱλαότης* in this passage, see England, 1921, *ad loc.*

[30] Pl. *Lg.* 4.712b4–6, 7.803e1–804b4, and 10.910b2–3. Empedocles, who, as we shall see (pp. 69–70), rejects animal sacrifice, makes his Aphrodite 'propitious' by statues, painted dedications of animals, perfumes, offerings of myrrh and incense, and libations of honey (frag. *VS* 31 B 128).

[31] Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.9 and 1.4.18. Cf. Pl. *Laches* 198e4–5.

[32] Cf. Pl. *Ti.* 90c4–6. Xenophon in the *Cyropaedia* (8.1.24) has the Persians thinking that 'they themselves will be more *eudaimon* if they "serve the gods"' just as does Cyrus who is 'most *eudaimon* and a ruler'.

[33] On these aspects of *eudaimonia*, see Aristotle, *EN* 1.1095a18–25, b14–17, 7.1152b6–7 and 1153b14–15 and Introduction, pp. 7–9.

thinking'. This 'service' 'pleases' the gods and makes them 'propitious'. The human performs this 'service' as he would for a parent, in return for the good things he has received. Cult acts, properly done, are 'dear' to the god as are those who perform them. These acts establish and maintain a *charis* relationship between men and gods, a mutual exchange of pleasing favours. The gods receive honour and gifts betokening honour; humans, in turn, have safe and prosperous families and cities, success in agriculture, war, and divination, and, most importantly, may find *eudaimonia*. The difference in the character and value of the favours given and received distinguish this relationship from the purely 'commercial', where exchanges of equal value are expected. And, finally, this 'service' is one part of justice, that part that concerns the gods.

2

Prayer, Sacrifice, Festivals, Dedications, and Priests in 'Service to the Gods'

PRAYER

Prayers, the attempt to 'persuade' a god or to 'ask' the god for something (Pl. *Rep.* 3.399b4–5),[1] are a major component of 'service to the gods', and they, along with dedications and other 'service' to the gods, are part of humans' endeavour to 'associate' or 'interact' (προσομιλεῖν) with the gods (*Lg.* 4.716d6–e1).[2] A knowledge of praying (εὔχεσθαι) is part of 'religious correctness', and prayers establish *charis* with the gods.[3] Plato, like virtually all philosophers, accepted prayer as an institution. One who rejected prayer was the Athenian Aristodemus 'The Small', whose conversation with Socrates Xenophon portrays in the *Memorabilia.* On his own admission Aristodemus did not sacrifice or pray to the gods or practise divination and laughed at those who did. His explanation was that he did not scorn divinity (τὸ δαιμόνιον), but thought it too 'magnificent' or

[1] Cf. Pl. *Euthphr.* 14c8–9, *Lg.* 7.801a9, and *Plt.* 290c8–d2. On prayers in and by philosophers, see Parker, 1998; Pulleyn, 1997; Meijer, 1981: 232–45; Des Places, 1960; von Fritz, 1945: 34–9. On prayers specifically in Plato, McPherran, 2000*a* and Jackson, 1971.

[2] Cf. Pl. *Smp.* 188d8–9, 202e7–203a4, and *La.* 199d7–e1. ὁμιλεῖν and its compounds indicate more than 'to talk' to others. Its primary meaning is 'to associate with', a corollary of which is 'conversation'. See e.g. *Ion* 531c4–7 and Chantraine, 1983: 797–8. In Pl. *Lg.* 10.887e1–2 individuals 'converse with' (προσδιαλεγομένους) the gods in prayer and supplications (ἱκετείαις).

[3] 'Religious correctness': *Euthphr.* 14b2–4 and c5–6. *Charis*: *Euthphr.* 14b2–4, *Cra.* 400e1–401a1, and Stilpon, fr. 177 [Döring] = D.L. 2.117.

'grand' (μεγαλοπρεπέστερον) to be in need of his 'service' (τῆς ἐμῆς θεραπείας). He adds that, if he thought the gods were concerned with humans, he would not neglect them (*Mem.* 1.4.2 and 10). This, in turn, launches Xenophon's Socrates into a long description of how the gods' concern for the human being is revealed in the obviously divine design of the human's senses, of the structure of his body and its parts, of his desires to have and raise children, in his wisdom, his soul and its activities, and in language and divination (1.4.4–18).[4] The upshot, of course, is that Aristodemus should 'serve' the gods and that this 'service' included prayer.[5]

Epicurus, too, proposed that the gods had no concern for men, but did not come to Aristodemus' conclusion about prayer: 'God does not give kind services but is free from care and concern for us. Turned away from the world, he does other things or, what seems to Epicurus the greatest blessedness, he does nothing, and kind services touch him no more than wrongs do' (frag. 364 [Usener] = Seneca, *Ben.* 4.4.1).[6] One would expect to find little place for prayer—as 'persuasion' or 'request'—in such a theology, and a quip attributed to Epicurus suggests criticisms of some forms of prayer: 'If the god were complying with the prayers of men, then all men would be perishing more quickly because they are constantly praying for many harsh things against one another' (frag. 388 [Usener]). But, in fact, Epicurus did pray as well as sacrifice to the gods, and this led his supporters to claim his piety and his opponents to charge him with hypocrisy for concealing from the public his real

[4] On this passage of Xenophon, and on its relationship to Platonic accounts, see Beckman, 1979: 247–50. For the claim that the historical Socrates, disinterested in such *physiologia*, could not have made such an argument, see Vlastos, 1991: 162. For the counterargument, that the passage is 're-creating a genuinely Socratic—or at the very least, possibly Socratic—line of reasoning', see McPherran, 1996: 273–91.

[5] Aristodemus was a devoted follower of Socrates, and it is he whom Plato has report the conversations and speeches of the *Symposium*. But Aristodemus, apparently, was not part of Socrates' inner circle and is recognized only as a disciple, not as a philosopher himself. On what is known of Aristodemus, see Nails, 2002: 52–3.

[6] Or, as an Epicurean text puts it, 'do not introduce the idea of a *charis* relationship (χαριτωνίας) with the gods' (*POxy.* 215, col. II, lines 9–11, for which see Obbink, 1984: 612). For the possibility that this text is from Epicurus himself, see Obbink, 1992*b*: 188–91. Cf. D.L. 10.139 and Epicurus, frag. 365 [Usener].

beliefs.[7] For Epicurus, 'to pray is natural for us, not because the gods would be hostile if we did not pray, but in order that, according to the understanding of beings surpassing in power and excellence, we may realize our fulfilments and social conformity with the laws'.[8] In Epicurean theology and practice, transcendent deities do not exclude at least certain forms of prayer.

Plato accepted the institution of prayer but criticized mistaken types and uses of it found in contemporary society. He excludes from both his ideal state in the *Republic* and from the Cretan city he is designing in the *Laws* those 'begging priests' (ἀγύρται) and soothsayers who claim that they have power from the gods to 'cure' (ἀκεῖσθαι) an injustice committed by a man or his ancestors by means of, in Homer's words, 'sacrifices and kindly prayers' (θυσίαις καὶ εὐχωλαῖς ἀγαναῖσι) and by dedications.[9] For their proof that this can be done, such people quote Homer's famous description of Phoenix' argument to Achilles in *Il.* 9.497–501:

> Even the gods themselves are moved by entreaties (λιστοί).
> Humans turn away (the anger of) the gods by sacrifices,
> kindly prayers, libation, and the savour of meat.
> They entreat the gods whenever someone transgresses or
> commits an error.
>
> (*Rep.* 2.364b6–e2)

The transgressions that concern Plato in this discussion are those against justice, and if the gods can be begged or bought off from punishing the unjust in this life or the next, the case for living the unjust life becomes much stronger. So Adeimantus concludes his

[7] For full discussion and the ancient texts and modern bibliography on this topic, see Obbink, 1996: 396–8. That such concealment of views concerning prayer may have been necessary is suggested by Stilpon's response to the question whether he thought the gods felt *charis* (χαίρουσι) in prayers: 'Fool, do not ask me about these matters in the street but when I am alone' (frag. 177 [Döring] = D.L. 2.117).

[8] Philodemus, *On Piety* 740–50 [O] in Obbink's translation. From statements such as these Gerson (1990: 251 n. 73) concludes that for Epicurus 'the value of worship is purely psychological or social'. See also Hadzsits, 1908.

[9] Otherwise stated, such people claim to 'make the gods propitious by sacrifices and prayers' in the face of human injustice (Pl. *Lg.* 10.910b2–3). On the likely identity of such begging priests and soothsayers in contemporary Athens, see Parker, 2005*a*: 121–2.

'argument' for the benefits of the unjust life: 'If we are just, we will only be unpunished by the gods, but we will lose the profits from injustice. But if we are unjust, we will make our profits and then escape unpunished by persuading the gods, entreating them when we transgress and commit errors' (*Rep.* 2.364b4–366a5). Plato turns to this issue again only in the last of his writings, the *Laws*. Some, he has his lawgiver claim, have a mistaken belief about the gods, that they are concerned for human affairs but are easily persuaded by sacrifices and prayers (*Lg.* 10.885b8–9 and 888c2–7). Those who promise to persuade the gods, 'bewitching' (γοητεύοντες) them with sacrifices, prayers, and incantations, destroy individuals, families, and cities. Plato holds out for such individuals some of the harshest punishments his new city will have to offer: solitary confinement and, after death, their bodies cast outside the country and left unburied (*Lg.* 10.909a8–c4). Plato's major concern here is, of course, not with prayer but with justice, and, in that regard, with a specific type of prayer which, in his view, is based on a misconception of the nature of the gods[10] and encourages humans to imagine that they can pursue unjust acts without fear of divine punishment.[11]

The most common and most widespread criticism of prayer among the philosophers is directed against the most usual topics of prayer in everyday life. By Plato and Xenophon it is indicated, in various ways, that common requests in prayers were for marriage and a family, and that the children be 'good' and even 'famous'.[12] One

[10] For the argument that the nature of the gods is not such as to be persuaded not to punish the unjust acts of men, see *Lg.* 10.905d1–907d1. Cf. [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.149c2–150b1.

[11] By way of contrast, Xenophon in *Mem.* 2.2.14 has Socrates urging his son that he ask the gods to be 'understanding' (or 'forgiving') (συγγνώμονας) if he has neglected his mother in some way. Plato, too, has Socrates, as part of his playful prayer to Eros in the *Phaedrus*, pray for forgiveness (συγγνώμην) for his first speech attacking Eros (257a6). For an attempt to make this prayer not an exception to Plato's own rules for prayer, see Jackson, 1971: 24–7.

[12] In asking the question 'how might humans justly ask for "good children" (εὐτεκνία) from Zeus when Zeus did not even have the power to provide this for himself' (frag. 29 [K] = Clem. Al., *Pro.* 4.56.1), the Cynic Bion is looking to the mythological tradition. In cult Zeus would not be the deity to whom such prayers were directed. Kindstrand, 1976: 231–2 goes too far in claiming from this fragment that Bion 'ridicules and rejects prayer to the gods as being of no use at all'. Cf. Diogenes, frag. V B 343 [G] = D.L. 6.63.

also asked for health,[13] wealth, good crops, safety, good fortune, and *eudaimonia*.[14] One might also have prayed to be 'dear' to the gods.[15] Theages claims that all other men would pray, as he would, to be a tyrant and perhaps even a god ([Pl.] *Thg.* 125e8–126a4).[16] The philosophers claim that an individual should not pray to the gods for such specific things but only for 'the good things' and leave it to the gods to decide what are 'the good things'. In describing Socrates' practice, Xenophon in *Memorabilia* 1.3.2 gives the simplest statement of this:

> [Socrates] used to pray to the gods simply to give 'the good things' (*τὰ ἀγαθά*) since the gods know best what kinds of things are good. He thought that those who prayed for gold, silver, tyranny, or some other such thing were praying for nothing different than if they should pray for a dice game or a battle or any other of those things whose outcomes are unclear.[17]

Aristotle, who wrote a book on prayer (D.L. 5.22), from quite a different angle refines the definition of 'the good things' that should be requested in prayers in *Nicomachean Ethics* 5.1129b3–6 (slightly

[13] Democritus (*VS* 68 B 234] complained that 'humans ask for health from the gods in prayers but do not know that they have the power over this in themselves. By their own lack of self-control they do things opposed to health and by their appetites become themselves betrayers of their own health.' Diogenes the Cynic says much the same regarding sacrificing for health (frag. V B 345 [G] = D.L. 6.28).

[14] Socrates' prayer to Pan at *Phdr.* 279b8–c3 includes requests for both wealth and beauty, but with a very Socratic/Platonic reinterpretation of what those mean. On this famous prayer, see Jackson, 1971: 27–30.

[15] Marriage and family, to be deduced from the perverse prayer of Pl. *Phdr.* 240a6–7; children, *Phdr.* 240a6–7, that they be good and famous, *Rep.* 5.461a6–b1, *Menex.* 247d4–5; health, *Phdr.* 244d5–e2; wealth, *Phdr.* 279c1–3, Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.2; good crops, *Mem.* 3.14.3; safety, good fortune, and 'dearness' to god, Pl. *Cra.* 397b4–6; and *eudaimonia*, Xen. *Mem.* 4.2.36. For a more comprehensive list of common requests and their classifications in prayers, see Aubriot-Sévin, 1992: 109–21.

[16] Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.2.

[17] Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 2.2.10. Phaedrus gives such a qualification as an addendum to Socrates' prayer to Eros in the *Phaedrus*: 'Socrates, I pray with you that these things, if it is better that they be for us, come to be' (257b7–c1). For the same thought expressed by later philosophers of various schools, see the Cynic Diogenes (frag. V B 350 [G] = D.L. 6.42) and the Stoic Posidonius (frag. 429 [Theiler] = D.L. 7.124). Aristippus of Cyrene, an associate of Socrates (see Nails, 2002: 50–1), offers an interesting variation on this theme. He claimed that 'in general praying for good things and asking for something from the god is ridiculous. When a sick person asks the physicians for some food or drink, they do not give it then but when it seems to them to be beneficial' (frag. 227 [Mannebach] = IV A 132 [G]).

paraphrased): 'Humans pray for and pursue things that are simply good but not always good for some person. They ought not to do this but to pray that the things that are simply good be good also for themselves, and they ought to choose the ones that are good for themselves.'

If we can trust Diodorus (10.9.8), Pythagoras anticipated Socrates on the question of the proper objects of prayer: '[Pythagoras] said it was necessary in prayers to pray simply for the good things and not to name them individually, for example, the power to act as one wishes (ἐξουσία), strength, beauty, wealth, and other similar things. For many times each of these things totally destroys the people who have, as they desired, acquired them.'

A corollary to the theory that one should pray only for 'good things' is worked out in the *Alcibiades* 2, a dialogue that is very Platonic in character if not in fact written by Plato.[18] The dialogue opens with Alcibiades on his way to pray to a god, and Socrates introduces their conversation with three questions (138b1–8):

> Do you not think that the gods sometimes give some of the things that we happen to pray for individually and as a state, and do not give others? And that there are some people to whom they give them and others to whom they do not . . . ? Do you not think that there is need of much foresight so that a person does not fail to recognize that in fact he is praying for great evils when he thinks he is praying for good things?

As an example of the last he offers Oedipus who, when he could have prayed for a turning away of the evils besetting him, instead cursed his sons to mutual slaughter, thereby adding to his existing evils (138b9–c5). *Alcibiades* 2 concerns primarily thoughtfulness (φρόνησις) and the lack of it (ἀφροσύνη), knowledge (ἐπιστημή) and ignorance (ἄγνοια), and throughout illustrations and examples are drawn from the realm of prayer. One should not, for example, accept all things offered to him, such as a tyranny or generalship, or pray for them if, because of them, he is going to be harmed or even lose his life (141c9–d2).

Socrates offers as an appropriate model a prayer he claims to have heard from a wise (φρόνιμος) poet (143a1–3):

[18] On the ascription (or not) of this dialogue to Plato, see p. 3 n. 4.

> Zeus Basileus, give us good things (*τὰ μὲν ἐσθλά*)
> both when we pray and when we do not.
> And, as we pray, ward off the bad things (*τὰ δὲ δειλά*).

The Lacedaemonians, Socrates claims, follow just such a model and individually and as a state on each occasion make such a prayer (148b9–d2),

> bidding the gods to give 'the beautiful things' (*τὰ καλά*) in addition to 'the good things'. No one might hear them praying for more than this. Therefore, to the present time they are no less successful than any people. And if it has happened that they have not succeeded in all things, it is not on account of their prayers, but, as I think, it is up to the gods to give whatever someone prays for or the opposite.

Others, in particular the Athenians, give more and more expensive sacrifices, dedications, and processions to the gods every year, but, according to the prophet Ammon, the gods give more victories to the Lacedaemonians because of their *εὐφημία*. *εὐφημία* is 'good, proper speech' in a religious context, and Socrates here idiosyncratically identifies it with the Lacedaemonians' traditional prayer (148e3–149c1).[19]

Correct prayers and prayers that will most likely achieve their intended result, that is, *τὸ ἀγαθόν*, require knowledge, wisdom, and justice, and 'those who have wisdom (*φρόνιμοι*) and justice (*δίκαιοι*) are the only ones who know what one should do and say in regards to both men and the gods' (150b1–3). So, according to Diodorus (10.9.7), Pythagoras had told his followers that 'the wise (*τοὺς φρονίμους*) should pray for "the good things" on behalf of the unwise, because the unwise do not know what is truly good in life'.[20] The *Alcibiades* 2 comes to the radical but logical conclusion that one should not even attempt prayer until one acquires such wisdom, and so the dialogue ends with Alcibiades putting off his prayer to the god until he finds a teacher—playfully toying with Socrates on this topic—and acquires

[19] For the nature of *εὐφημία* and other idiosyncratic interpretations Plato offers of it, see pp. 59–60.

[20] It may say something of Pythagoras' view of his followers that he did not allow them 'to pray on behalf of themselves because they did not know what was beneficial' (D.L. 8.9).

that virtue.[21] So, too, the Athenian in the *Laws* claims it is a 'slippery thing' for a person who lacks 'reason' (νοῦς) to 'use prayer', since the opposite of what he wishes may result (3.688b6–c1). From the same discussion the Spartan concludes that one 'should not pray that all things follow his wishes, but that his wishes follow his "reason" (φρόνησις)'. As a logical conclusion to this line of thought, he claims each city and individual ought to pray to have 'reason' (νοῦς) (3.687e5–9).[22]

In the *Alcibiades* 2 an understanding of justice (δικαιοσύνη) is among the prerequisites for correct prayer (150b1–3), and Xenophanes of Colophon, about two centuries earlier, had urged fellow symposiasts to pray 'to be able to accomplish what is just' (frag. *VS* 21 B 1.13–16).[23] Interestingly, though, neither in the writings of Plato, whose concern with justice was pervasive, nor in those of the other philosophers of the time do we find similar prayers to be just or to be able to behave justly.[24] Personal justice is for them a product of philosophical study, not a gift given by the gods. Equally idiosyncratic, but to the Stoic philosophy of Fate and not to an individual, is the poetic prayer attributed to Cleanthes (*SVF* 1.527 = Epictetus, *Ench.* 53):

> Zeus and you, Fate, lead me
> to where I have been assigned by you,
> since I will follow unhesitatingly. And if I do not wish it,
> having become an evil person, I will none the less follow.[25]

[21] Daniel Devereux pointed out to me that one would not need 'wisdom' to pray if one prayed, as Socrates elsewhere recommends, only for 'what is good'.

[22] On the nature of νοῦς here, see Morrow, 1960: 564–5.

[23] On the distinction between 'being just' and 'being able to do what one knows to be just', on other aspects of this prayer, and for the claim that 'By stressing the need for divine assistance in a man's moral decision-making . . . Xenophanes radically differs from the authors of traditional prayers', see Marcovich, 1978: 7–8. From this prayer Fränkel (1975: 327–8) concludes, too broadly I think, that 'According to Xenophanes one should not ask the gods for protection and help, for success and prosperity, but should pray that one's own efforts may meet with success if—and only if—they aim at a virtuous purpose.' See also Meijer, 1981: 222 and 232–4.

[24] On this see von Fritz, 1945: 35–6. That Socrates in *Rep.* 4.432c6 prays for success in 'capturing' justice is quite another matter.

[25] On this prayer and on the prayers of the Stoics in general, see Algra, 2003: 174–6 and von Fritz, 1945: 37.

According to the Athenian in Plato's *Laws*, young children came to believe in the existence of the gods by seeing and hearing their parents in all seriousness praying and sacrificing to them (10.887d5–e7), and Plato found a place for prayer in the societies he created in both the *Republic* and the *Laws*. The most general statement of why this should be so he gives in *Lg.* 4.716d6–e1: 'For the good man to sacrifice and to associate (προσομιλεῖν) always with the gods by prayers, dedications, and all "service" (θεραπεία) to the gods is the finest, best, and most useful thing for the *eudaimon* life and is also most appropriate for him.'

Timaeus, as he begins his cosmology in the *Timaeus*, on Socrates' recommendation first invokes the gods, 'according to custom' (κατὰ νόμον), and states the general principle that one should pray to the gods at the beginning of every activity: 'Socrates, all who have even a little "sound thinking" (σωφροσύνη) call upon the god at the outset of every small and great activity. . . .[26] It is necessary for us to call upon the gods and goddesses and to pray to say all things in accordance with their understanding (νοῦς) and, secondly, with ours' (Pl. *Ti.* 27c1–d1). He also prays at the end of his discourse, that what has been rightly said be preserved, that his errors be corrected, and that he be given knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) (*Critias 106a3–b7).*[27] *In the Laws* the Athenian invokes 'god' at the beginning of his demonstration that the gods exist (10.893b1–3)[28] and as he and his companions begin to fashion laws for the Cretan city: 'Let us call upon "god" for the "construction" of the city. May he hear

[26] In regard to just such 'preliminary prayers' Hermarchus, head of the Epicurean School after Epicurus, remarked, 'Will we not go on to infinity if at the start of even every small activity we need a prayer? We will need one prayer so that we may make another one, and we will stop nowhere' (frag. 48 [Auricchio] = Procl. on Pl. *Ti.* 66d–e).

[27] For other examples of Plato giving speakers prayers at the beginnings and/or ends of their discourses or of important divisions within them, see, for endings, *Phdr.* 257a3–c1 and 279b6–c8. Cf. [Pl.] *Thg.* 131a5–7. For beginnings, *Rep.* 4.432c6, *Ti.* 48d4–e1, *Phlb.* 61b11–c3. Cf. *Ep.* 8.352e6–353a2 and Xen. *Oec.* 6.1. Such prayers at beginnings of discourses may take the Homeric/Hesiodic form, invoking the Muses (*Phdr.* 237a7–b1) or Apollo, the Muses, and Mnemosyne (*Criti.* 108c2–d8). On the Muses as recipients of Platonic prayers, see Jackson, 1971: 21–4.

[28] On this prayer see Verdenius, 1952: 265. In similar circumstances in the *Epinomis*, at the beginning of a theogony, the Athenian and Clinias agree to pray to the gods 'to say the finest and best things about them' (980b7–c5).

us, and having heard us, may he come "propitious and kindly" (ἵλεως καὶ εὐμενής)[29] to us in order to arrange with us the city and its laws' (4.712b4–6).

Among the laws that the Athenian and his companions establish for the Cretan city are several concerning prayer. No one, for example, will be permitted to have sanctuaries of gods privately in his own house, a law directed in part against the 'not respectful' and unjust so that they cannot expect to appease the gods with secret sacrifices and prayers and thus increase their injustice and bring charges from the gods against themselves, government officials, and the city (10.910a7–b8). The individual should rather go to the public sanctuaries to sacrifice and pray. He is to hand over the items of sacrifice to the priests and priestesses, and he and anyone he wishes to join him are to pray *together with* these priests and priestesses, not privately (10.909d8–e2). Worse than amateur offenders in this regard are the professional begging priests and sorcerers who, for money, claim to persuade the gods by sacrifices, prayers, and incantations both to forgive the injustices of their clients and to harm their clients' enemies (*Rep.* 2.364b56–e2 and *Lg.* 10.909a8–b6). As we have seen, Plato rails against them in the *Republic* and severely punishes and isolates them in the *Laws*. These practices, if not prohibited by the state, would lead people to think that they could practice injustice with impunity, an intolerable situation in Plato's world.

When, in a family of the Cretan city, because of the death or immorality of the male heir, a 'son' is introduced from another family to establish the male succession, the relatives are to pray 'that he become for them a begetter of children, sustainer of the household (ἑστιαοῦχον), and a "server" of all sacred and non-sacred matters (θεραπεύτην ὁσίων καὶ ἱερῶν), with better fortunes than the (original) father had had' (*Lg.* 9.878a6–8).[30] Similarly in the *Republic* Socrates has the priestesses and priests pray at the arranged mass marriages of that state 'prayers which the priestesses, priests, and all the city make at each of these marriages, that the offspring of the "good" be "better" (than their parents) and those of the "useful" be

[29] On this pairing of ἵλεως and εὐμενής, see p. 11.
[30] On ὁσίων καὶ ἱερῶν, see Introduction, n. 39.

"more useful"' (5.461a6–9). In both cases the prayers are essentially for 'the good things'—here, as 'the better and more useful'—and follow the principle that one should pray only for 'the good'. The specific requests of the first prayer reflect in addition Plato's strong concern for the survival of his 5,040 households.

The 360 members of the Council of the Cretan city are to be selected by a process of voting and lottery, with twice the requisite number chosen by a complicated, class-based system of voting, and then one half of this number selected by lot. The Athenian explains that 'it is necessary to use the "equality" (*τῷ ἴσῳ*) of the lot because of the peevishness of the multitudes, and one must call upon god and Agathe Tyche (Good Fortune) in prayers to guide the lot to what is most just' (*πρὸς τὸ δικαιότατον*) (*Lg.* 6.757e3–6). Given the practical and social need to make the multitudes not feel excluded, the lawgiver introduces the element of chance, but intends to direct it to what is just with the help of both god and Agathe Tyche, Chance herself, who in this period was worshipped in many cities as a deity.[31] The prayer that god promote the cause of justice is reminiscent of Xenophanes' prayer (frag. *VS* 21 B 1.13–16), but the circumstances here are very different.

Correct prayer required knowledge, wisdom, and justice, and, given Plato's other views of poets, it is not surprising that he has his lawgiver establish a law that the poets who composed prayers 'must recognize that prayers are requests to the gods and must pay great attention to not, unknowingly, asking for an evil thing as if it were good' (*κακὸν ὡς ἀγαθόν*). Poets, however, as a class (*γένος*) do not really know what is good and not, and therefore the lawgiver does not allow poets to make public their prayers and hymns until they have been approved by specially appointed judges and the guardians of the laws. Only then could those hymns and encomia, with their prayers, be correctly sung for the gods, *daimones*, and heroes (*Lg.* 7.801a5–e4).[32]

[31] On the extent of the cult of Agathe Tyche in time and place in the Greek world, see Ziegler, *RE* s.v. Tyche, cols. 1673–82. Epicurus, in opposition to what 'the many think', did not accept *τύχη* as a god (D.L. 10.134).

[32] For hymns and encomia in the city of the *Republic*, see 10.607a3–7.

Curses are treated in the philosophical tradition as prayers for evils for others and can take the form of simple prayers, incantations, or curse tablets.[33] Plato, as we have seen, criticizes, punishes, and expels those who engage in such practices for profit (*Rep.* 2.364b6–366a5, *Lg.* 10.909a8–b6). His lawgiver would not allow the common practice of parties in a lawsuit cursing to destruction themselves and their families, all to establish the credibility of their statements (12.949a8–b2).[34] Plato himself resorts to curses to safeguard three critical principles of his Cretan city: the inalienability of ownership of plots of land, the honour due to parents, and the need to prosecute murderers. Against those who attempt to buy or sell allotments of land, the priests and priestesses are to pray over the first, second, and third sacrifices that the malefactors suffer the ills (πάθη) befitting these acts (*Lg.* 5.741c2–6). The Athenian also states categorically that the gods hear the curses of 'dishonoured' parents, and he offers as examples Oedipus' curses against his sons, Amyntor's against Phoenix, and Theseus' against Hippolytus. 'A parent cursing his children is like no one else cursing others, and most justly so.'[35] But if the parent or grandparent is duly honoured, he prays for 'good things' for his children, and the gods hear and grant such prayers (11.931b5–e9). And, thirdly, a curse forms part of the lawgiver's law requiring relatives to prosecute the murderer of their kinsman (9.871b1–5). Plato's lawgiver would also have subject to a curse, as well as opprobrium and a fine, anyone who hoards foreign currency or knows of another doing so (5.742b7–c2).[36]

In summary, Plato and Socrates, as portrayed by both Plato and Xenophon, accepted the institution of prayer and recommended prayer on many occasions that, in the Greek popular tradition, called for prayer. Plato offered, however, two caveats: one should not, or could not, pray to have his injustices forgiven—a particular concern of

[33] On the relationship of curses and prayers in the Greek tradition, see Watson, 1991: 3–4. On the nature and use of the curse tablets referred to in *Rep.* 2.364c4, see Faraone, 2002: 89–90.

[34] For examples of such curses, see Watson, 1991: 33–4 and Parker, 1983: 186–7.

[35] On the power of parental curses, see Parker, 1983: 196–7.

[36] On such curses as parts of laws, see Watson, 1991: 21. In the *Critias* (119e4–5) Plato has in the inscription containing the laws of Atlantis an oath with a curse on those who disobey them.

Plato—and, secondly and common to most of the philosophers, people should pray only for what is 'good', and it required thought, knowledge, and philosophical training to determine what that 'good' is.

SACRIFICE

> Is not to sacrifice to give gifts (δωρεῖσθαι) to the gods, and to pray to make requests (αἰτεῖν) of them?

So the fundamental distinction between sacrifice and prayer is succinctly expressed by Socrates in Plato's *Euthyphro* 14c8–9.[37] Sacrifice is, as we have seen, part of the 'service to the gods', perhaps the most important part. When sacrifice and prayer are paired, as a phrase ('sacrifice and prayer') or in a discussion like that above, sacrifice is almost always given priority of position.[38]

Sacrifices are regularly given priority over dedications, too.[39] Sacrifices, along with divination, form part of the 'partnership' (κοινωνία) between humans and gods (Pl. *Smp.* 188b7–c1). Sacrifices honour the gods and are a critical element of the human–divine *charis* relationship, and such honour and *charis* are given as the first two purposes of sacrifice by Aristotle's student and successor Theophrastus (*On Piety*, frag. 12.42–8 [Pötscher][40]):

[37] Pulleyn, 1997: 7, in assessing Euthyphro's assent to this question, comments that 'in all likelihood Euthyphro was doing no more than saying what any Greek would have said if he had stopped to think about the matter'. On sacrifice in the philosophers, see Parker, 1998; Obbink, 1988; Meijer, 1981: 245–59; Schmidt, 1907. On sacrifice in Plato, McPherran, 2000*a*.

[38] As examples, Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.2; Plato, *Euthphr.* 14c5–d2 (with a typically Platonic chiastic close), *Smp.* 202e8–203a1, *Rep.* 2.364b8, 5.461a6 and 459e6–7, *Lg.* 4.716d6–7, 7.821d3–4, 10.885b8–9, 888c7, 909b4–5 and d8–e2, 910b2–3. Noteworthy counterexamples, with prayers first, are *Euthphr.* 14b2–4 and *Smp.* 202e3–5.

[39] *Rep.* 2.362c1–3 and [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.148e5–7, 149e2, with a counterexample in 149e6–8, and Pl. *Lg.* 4.716d6–7.

[40] The few surviving fragments of Theophrastus' *On Piety* have been extracted primarily from Porphyry's *De Abstinentia.* See [Pötscher]. On Porphyry's *De Abstinentia* itself, see Price, 1999: 139–40. More recent studies, for which see Fortenbaugh, 1984: 54–65 and 262–74, raise questions as to which of Pötscher's fragments should be assigned to *On Piety* or even to Theophrastus. Our concern is whether the

One must sacrifice to the gods for three purposes: because of honour (τιμή), because of *charis*, or because of one's need for good things. For just as we think we must make first-fruit offerings to good men, so we think we must make them also to the gods. We honour the gods when we are seeking that there be for us either a turning away of evils or the preparation of good things, or after we have had good experiences and not for the purpose of obtaining some (additional) benefit, or in the simple honouring of their good disposition toward us.

Rendering honour (τιμή) to the gods is a fundamental concept of Greek practised religion, and honour is what in particular the Greek gods wanted from their human devotees. We will treat the nature of 'honouring the gods' in Chapter 4 and will find that this 'honouring of the gods' was often considered, as here by Theophrastus for sacrifices, the prime purpose behind festivals, dedications, hymns, dances, and other such elements of Greek cult.

Sacrifices, when received by the gods, are 'pleasing' (κεχαρισμένα), as Xenophon's Socrates speaks of the offerings by good and evil men: 'It would not be worthwhile for men to live if the (offerings) from the wicked were more "pleasing" to the gods than those from the good' (*Mem.* 1.3.3).[41] Here, as we have seen, the offerings designated κεχαρισμένα should be thought not merely 'pleasing' but 'pleasing (or acceptable) in the context of the *charis* relationship between men and gods'.[42]

Under the rubric of 'the need for the good things', the third of Theophrastus' three purposes of sacrifice, we may place his further statement that 'we honour the gods (which, in this context, means "we make offerings to the gods") to turn away evils and to acquire good things'. Related, but distinct, are offerings made *after* individuals have been well treated by the god.[43] In the former cases the human first gives the *charis* that he hopes the god will repay. In the latter, the god has already given the *charis*, and it is now time for the human to

fragments can be attributed to Theophrastus, not to a certain work. Of the fragments used here and in the following pages, Fortenbaugh (265–6) and others question no. 8 as being completely Theophrastean and reject nos. 5 and 6 entirely. See also Obbink, 1988: 287 nn. 11 and 12 and Bouffartigue and Patillon, 1979: 17–29.

[41] Cf. Pl. *Euthphr.* 14b2–7 (proposition 4 in Ch. 1) and *Criti.* 119d7–e1.

[42] On the *charis* relationship in a religious context, see pp. 14–15 and 206–7.

[43] For these two categories, see also Pl. *Lg.* 10.909e5–910a1.

repay that. In Theophrastus' final purpose, 'the simple honouring of the gods' good disposition toward us', there is in the adjective 'simple' (*ψιλήν*) the suggestion that here the humans are expecting nothing specific in return. All claimed by Theophrastus thus far is in complete accord, both in language and thought, with the traditions of Greek practised religion.

As to the origins of such sacrifices, Socrates in the *Republic* leaves the establishment of them, as well as the foundings of sanctuaries and virtually all cult matters, to the instructions of 'the ancestral *exegete*', Apollo of Delphi (4.427b1–c4).[44] Plato's lawgivers for the Cretan city are more self-reliant and are quite willing to create new sacrifices, hundreds of them, to accommodate the political and social needs of their new city. They collaborate with the Delphic Oracle to determine which sacrifices there should be and to which gods, but trust themselves to determine the time and number of these sacrifices (*Lg.* 8.828a1–d2). These lawgivers are also very respectful of 'old', established sacrifices in the region in which they are establishing their new colony. Some of these resulted from oracles of Apollo at Delphi, Zeus at Dodona, or Ammon at Siwa;[45] others were based on 'old accounts' (*παλαιοὶ λόγοι*) which persuaded the people, either by portents (*φάσματα*) or inspirations (*ἐπίνοιαι*) from the gods (*Lg.* 5.738b5–c3). Sacrifices originate, then, from acts of human lawgivers motivated or validated by signs in various forms from the gods.

The action of Plato's lawgivers (*νομοθέται*) in establishing sacrifices is nicely reflected in Aristotle's observation that sacrifice belongs to that category of things determined by *nomos* (law/convention), not by *physis* (nature): 'A thing of *nomos* (*νομικόν*) is that for which, originally, it makes no difference whether it is one way or another, but, when they establish it, it makes a difference, for example . . . whether to sacrifice one goat or two sheep, and in addition what they establish by law (*νομοθετοῦσι*) in individual cases, for example, to sacrifice to Brasidas' (*EN* 5.1134b20–4).[46]

[44] Cf. *Rep.* 7.540b7–c2.

[45] So, in the *Laws*, ten years before the Persian Wars the Cretan Epimenides introduced into Athens sacrifices that Apollo of Delphi ordered (1.642d4–e1).

[46] Brasidas was the Spartan general for whom, after his death in 422, the Amphipoliteans established a hero cult.

That sacrifices were a matter of *nomos*, whether as law or convention, recurs, in another form, in the policy of Xenophon's Socrates towards cult matters. He followed the prescription of the oracle of Delphi which, when asked 'how one must act concerning sacrifice or the "service" to ancestors or any other such thing', responded that 'by acting in accordance with the *nomos* of the city, people would be acting with "proper respect" (εὐσεβῶς)'. So, according to Xenophon, 'Socrates himself acted and advised others to act' (*Mem.* 1.3.1; cf. 4.3.16). So, too, Epicurus, according to Philodemus (*On Piety* 879–84 [O]), urged: 'Let us sacrifice to the gods in a "religiously correct" (ὁσίως) and beautiful way when it is fitting and let us do well all things according to the *nomoi*.'[47]

Sacrifices were thus thought to be both established and maintained by *nomoi*. These *nomoi* were the products of men, and hence could be changed by men, but because of the oracular or divine sanction behind them—as is most apparent in Plato's *Republic*—the lawgivers could change existing *nomoi* concerning sacrifices only with the approval of the Delphi Oracle (as examples, *Lg.* 5.738b5–d1 and 6.772c6–d4). Not only sacrifice as a cultic act but particular sacrifices to particular gods were thus, in a sense, human *nomoi*, but unlike most such human *nomoi* had a validity based upon acknowledged divine instruction and approval.

Plato, then, accepted sacrifice in principle as did virtually all the philosophers of his time.[48] Even Theophrastus, despite his numerous and vigorous criticisms of Greek sacrificial practices—to be discussed later—described, without reservations, the fate of non-sacrificers (ἄθυτοι). For his example Theophrastus had to turn to the Thoes,

[47] There is, however, in frag. 56 [Usener] = Ath. 5.179d an indication that in symposia Epicurus unconventionally did not offer a libation or first-fruits to the gods and ate 'unsacrificed' (ἄθυτα) meat. For an account and defence of animal killing (not, explicitly, in sacrifice) in early times, commonly attributed to the Epicurean Hermarchus (frag. 34 [Auricchio] = Porph., *Abst.* 1.7–12), see [Auricchio], 137–50.

[48] Diogenes the Cynic, like Plato, apparently did not fault sacrifice as an institution but the misuse of it: 'Sacrificing to the gods for health but then in the sacrifice feasting to the detriment of health riled him' (frag. V B 345 [G] = D.L. 6.28). Although later Stoics accepted sacrifice, at least 'for the sake of the man in the street' (Meijer, 1981: 256–7), I have found no views on sacrifice that can be confidently assigned to Zeno, Chrysippus, or others of the Old Stoa.

a non-Greek people on the fringes of the Greek world (*On Piety*, frag. 3.5–18 [Pötscher]):

Some appear to have become non-sacrificers, making no first-fruit offerings of their possessions to the gods . . . For this reason the Thoes, who dwelt in the borderlands of Thrace, since they made no first-fruit offerings or sacrifices, were snatched up from mankind at that time, and suddenly no one could find the inhabitants, their city, or the foundations of their homes.

> They were unwilling to restrain one another's rash *hybris*,
> nor were they willing to 'serve' (*θεραπεύειν*) the immortals
> or to sacrifice on the sacred altars of the blessed gods—
> which is the right of the immortals.

And therefore,

> Zeus, son of Cronus, in his anger covered them up
> because they were not giving honours (*τιμαί*) to the blessed gods.

The same Aristodemus who refused prayer also declined to sacrifice because for him divinity was too 'magnificent' to be in need of this cult service (Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.2 and 10). Despite his transcendent gods Epicurus sacrificed as well as prayed.[49] After a sacrifice he reportedly quoted a line from a comedy of Menander: 'I was sacrificing to gods who pay no attention to me' (frag. 30 [Usener] = Plut. *Mor.* 1102b). If we may transfer to sacrifice Epicurus' view of prayer, then sacrifice would be a response to humans' innate idea of 'beings surpassing in power and excellence'.

Philosophers, though accepting sacrifice as an institution, found fault with some contemporary uses of it. As with prayers and dedications, Plato would not have one think that the gods can be persuaded to forgive injustices by sacrifices, and he vigorously attacks those who believe and practise such things, claiming that those who promise to persuade the gods, 'bewitching' them with sacrifices, prayers, and incantations, destroy individuals, families, and cities.

For Plato, a second area of concern was *εὐφημία*. *Euphemia* ('good speech') was the use of appropriate language by those attending religious rituals, or, conversely, the avoidance of inauspicious language. The latter was most easily achieved by silence, and the command *εὐφημεῖτε* on a religious occasion was often tantamount to

[49] See pp. 44–5 and also Obbink, 1996: 411–12.

an order 'to keep quiet'. In the *Laws* the Athenian says that 'when sacrificing and praying with "proper respect" (*εὐσεβῶς*), people are to employ *euphemia*' (7.821d3–4). The opposite of *euphemia* is *βλασφημία*, the 'saying of harmful things',[50] and when gods hear humans using 'blasphemy', 'they do not accept even expensive processions and sacrifices' ([Pl.] *Alc.* 2.149c4–6 and 150a2–6). In imagining what appears to be a family sacrifice, the Athenian lawgiver describes the effect of such 'blasphemy' on the participants (*Lg.* 7.800b8–c3):

> When a sacrifice has been made and the sacrificial victims have been burned in the conventional way (*κατὰ νόμον*), if someone, a son or brother, privately[51] standing by the altars and the victims, should commit total 'blasphemy', would not he by uttering this create in his father and his other family members dispiritedness (*ἀθυμία*) and a bad voice-omen (*κακὴν ὅτταν καὶ μαντείαν*)?[52]

Nothing said of the need for *euphemia* at sacrifices thus far is at variance with conventional cult practices, but Plato redefines and expands the concept of *euphemia*, in two separate ways. In the *Laws* (7.821b5–d4) he makes it 'blasphemy' to tell 'lies', intentionally or not, about the gods, here that the courses of his divine Sun and Moon are irregular.[53] Also in the *Laws* Plato includes in the lack of *euphemia*, that is, in 'blasphemy', the contemporary choral productions including most obviously tragedy (7.800c7–d6):

> When some official in a state celebration performs a sacrifice, after this not one but a number of choruses come in, and standing not far from the altars but sometimes right beside them, they pour every 'blasphemy' over the victims and with their words, rhythms, and harmonies of lament they strain the souls of those who listen. Whoever especially makes the city that has just sacrificed weep carries off the victory prize. Are we not to vote against this practice?

[50] For *βλασφημία* contrasted to *εὐφημία*, see also Dem. 25.26.

[51] i.e., probably, not officiating or performing the sacrifice himself.

[52] Cf. Eur. *Ion* 1187–95. That blasphemy could ruin an attempt at divination may lie behind Thphr. *Char.* 19.7.

[53] Cf. Pl. *Rep.* 2.381e1–6 and *Smp.* 201e8–10 and [Pl.] *Hp.Ma.* 293a3–6. For telling lies about the gods being also 'religiously incorrect', see pp. 145–6. For 'telling lies' and blaspheming against the dead, see Aristotle, frag. 44 [Rose] = Plut. *Mor.* 115b–c.

In Plato's view such laments, like that in Aeschylus, *Choephoroi* 306–478, if necessary at all, should be performed not on 'pure days' (*ἡμέραι καθαραί*) but on 'impure' ones (*ἀποφράδες*) when no sacrifices are performed for the Olympian gods,[54] and for them one should not wear the wreaths and gold jewellery suitable for public festivals (7.800e5–6). Plato here expresses in a cultic framework his well-known hostility towards such dramatic and choral performances that he elsewhere faults for their negative educational influences. Jokes, too, his lawgiver found inappropriate to public sacrifices (*Lg.* 11.935b5–6), and the net result is that Plato in the *Laws* would, if not totally ban, at least disassociate tragic and comic productions from their long-established religious and sacrificial settings, particularly in festivals of Dionysus. Plato claims that each of these forms of 'blasphemy'—lies about the gods and the jokes and tear-wrenching laments of dramatic productions—causes sacrifices and their accompanying prayers to fail, and, in Plato's view, both forms of blasphemy were common features of Greek cultic life.[55]

In the *Republic* Plato had Adeimantus list the benefits of wealth as they were commonly conceived. These included, among other things, the possession of fields and of large, beautiful houses with furniture to match, hospitality for friends from abroad, and the ability to perform 'private sacrifices' to the gods (4.419a1–10).[56] In the *Alcibiades* 2 Socrates claims that 'of the Greeks we (Athenians) perform the most and the most beautiful sacrifices'. The Spartans, on the other hand, are so negligent towards the gods that they sacrifice even maimed (*ἀνάπηρα*) victims, but nonetheless their prayers—as described above—are heard (148e4–149a6). The criticisms of

[54] On *ἡμέραι καθαραί* and *ἀποφράδες*, see Mikalson, 1975.

[55] In the possibly Pseudo-Platonic *Alcibiades* 2 the praying by the ignorant—as was discussed above—for what is in reality bad or harmful is also treated as 'blasphemy' (149c4–6 and 150c3–6).

[56] Cf. 2.362b7–c8 and 365e2–366a5. See also Xen. *Mem.* 2.3.11 and *Oec.* 2.5 and 11.9 and Parker, 2005: 43–4. Relevant to this topic is also the mistaken notion of 'service to the gods' as a 'commercial craft', for which see p. 39. The author of [Hippocrates] *Aër* 40–50 offers an interesting comment in this regard concerning the so-called 'divine disease' afflicting Scythian aristocrats: 'And yet it was fitting, since this disease is more divine than the others, that it not attack only the most noble and richest of the Scythians, but all of them similarly, and even more those who are poor, if in fact the gods find *charis* (*χαίρουσι*) when they are honoured and admired by

expensive sacrifices by the rich implicit in these two passages are made explicit in Xenophon's description of Socrates' usual practice (*Mem.* 1.3.3):

When Socrates made small sacrifices from his small means, he believed that he was in no way inferior to those who made many large sacrifices from their many and great means. He said it was not good for the gods if they felt more *charis* (ἔχαιρον) in great sacrifices than in small ones. For otherwise the sacrifices from wicked men would be more 'pleasing' (κεχαρισμένα) to them than those from good men. And it would not be worthwhile for men to live if the sacrifices from the wicked were more 'pleasing' to the gods than those from the good. But he thought that the gods especially felt *charis* in the honours from those 'most properly respectful' (τῶν εὐσεβεστάτων). And he praised this line of poetry,

> Sacrifice to the immortal gods as your means allow.[57]

Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in a discussion of relations between individuals of unequal status, makes more explicit the nature of 'as your means allow' (8.1163b13–18):

One who receives a benefit in terms of money or virtue must pay back in return honour (τιμή), paying back what is possible. Friendship seeks what is possible, not what is based on value (τὸ κατ' ἀξίαν). It is not possible (to return equal value) in all matters, as, for example, in the honours towards the gods and parents. For no one might ever pay back their value, but the person 'serving' (ὁ θεραπεύων) to the limit of his means seems to be a decent man.[58]

Theopompus, a Chian historian living in Athens in the fourth century, told a story (*FGrHist* 115 F 344 = Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.16) reflecting the superiority of inexpensive over expensive sacrifices, but in the context not of 'means' but of 'proper respect', and this story was taken into philosophical discussions of 'proper respect' and sacrifice:

humans and in return give back favours. For it is reasonable that the wealthy make many sacrifices and dedications to the gods and honour them since they have a lot of money, and that the poor do so less because they do not have money. Also, the poor criticize the gods because they do not give them money, so that it is reasonable that the poor bear punishments for such errors more than do the wealthy.'

On sacrifices of the rich contrasted to those of the poor, see Bolkestein, 1939: 174–7.

[57] Hesiod, *Op.* 336.

[58] Cf. *EN* 9.1164b4–6.

Theopompus says that a Magnesian man came to Delphi from Asia. He was very rich and possessed many herd animals. This man was accustomed to make many grand sacrifices to the gods each year, in part because of his ready supply of resources, but in part because of his 'proper respect' (*εὐσέβειαν*) and his wish to please (*ἀρέσκειν*) the gods. With such a disposition towards the divine he came to Delphi, and after he had paraded his hecatomb for the god and after he had honoured Apollo in a grand way he went into the oracle to consult the god. He thought that he of all men gave the best 'service' (*θεραπεύειν*) to the gods, and therefore he asked the Pythia to tell him who honoured the divine best and most eagerly, and who made the sacrifices which were 'most dear' (*προσφιλεστάτας*) to the gods. He assumed that he would be given the first prize. But the priestess replied that the man who best of all men 'served' the gods was Clearchus, a man who dwelled in Methydrion of Arcadia.

The Magnesian was astonished, and he greatly desired to see and meet the man and to learn how he performed his sacrifices. He therefore quickly went to Methydrion and at first felt scorn for the smallness and poorness of the place. He thought that no individual there, not even the whole city itself, could honour the gods better and more grandly than he. When he met Clearchus, he asked him to tell him how he honoured the gods. Clearchus said that he performed religious rites and zealously sacrificed at the proper times. On the first of each month he garlanded and polished Hermes and Hecate and the rest of the sacred things which his ancestors had passed down to him. He said he honoured them with incense and barleycakes and round cakes. And every year he participated in the state sacrifices and he did not neglect any festival. In all these sacrifices he 'served' the gods not by killing cattle and butchering victims, but by offering whatever happened to be at hand. He said he carefully distributed to the gods the first-fruit offerings from all the surplus fruits and produce which he received from the land. Some of these he presented as they were, and some he burned for the gods.

Theopompus' contemporary Theophrastus alludes to a very similar story, perhaps the same story with different names of the principals. He draws the moral of the story and, for the first time in the Greek tradition, points to the importance of what he terms 'continual proper respect' (*συνεχὴς εὐσέβεια*) for all—that is, 'proper respect' exhibited regularly and often, and possible only because of the availability of inexpensive offerings (*On Piety*, frag. 7.45–53 [Pötscher]):

What is inexpensive and easily at hand contributes to continual 'proper respect' and to the 'proper respect' of all. And experience gives witness to the fact that the gods find *charis* in this more than in what is very expensive.[59] Otherwise the Pythia would not have said, when the Thessalian man came bringing cattle with gilded horns and the hecatombs to Pythian Apollo, that the man of Hermione won more *charis* when he sacrificed ground barley, taking it from his purse with three fingers. After the man from Hermione heard what the Pythia said, he put everything left in his purse on the altar, and the Pythia then said that by having done this he was twice as hateful as before he had been 'pleasing' (κεχαρισμένος). So, what is inexpensive is dear to the gods.

In Theophrastus' view the practice of sacrificing animals is bad for many reasons, as we shall soon see, and among them is that animals are expensive and often difficult to acquire. The poor cannot afford them and city-dwellers cannot raise them (frag. 7.39–41), and therefore personal 'continual proper respect' is adversely affected. Theophrastus claimed also that such expensive offerings introduced a 'swarm' of other evils, including superstitious fear of the gods (δεισιδαιμονία), luxury (τρυφή), and the mistaken assumption, which we earlier found criticized in Plato, that one 'could bribe the divine (τὸ θεῖον) and cure injustices by sacrifices' (frag. 8.8–10).[60]

Xenophon's Socrates, as we have seen, followed the *nomoi* of his city, as did the Clearchus of Theopompus' story, and 'thought that the gods especially felt *charis* in the honours from the most "properly respectful"'. But to Socrates, in addition to following the *nomoi*, the moral character of the one sacrificing was important, and 'he thought it would not be worthwhile for men to live if the sacrifices from the wicked (πονηρῶν) were more "pleasing" (κεχαρισμένα) to the gods than those from the good (χρηστῶν)' (Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.3). Xenophon thus has Socrates make the prerequisites of successful sacrifice both adherence to cultic *nomoi* and moral goodness of the worshipper. Plato has his Athenian lawgiver in the *Laws* give similar importance to the 'goodness' of the sacrificer: for the *good* person

[59] Cf. Theophrastus, frag. 10 [Pötscher]: 'One ought to be a "sacrifice-lover" (φιλοθύτην), not by sacrificing many things [at one time?] but by honouring the divine often. The former is a sign of wealth, the latter of "religious correctness".'

[60] On the uncertain attribution of all elements of this fragment to Theophrastus, see Fortenbaugh, 1984: 265.

sacrifice and other cult 'service' to the gods is 'the finest, best, and most useful thing for the *eudaimon* life' (*Lg.* 4.716d6–e1). But here the lawgiver explains further, why the sacrifices of the good succeed and those of the evil fail (4.716e2–717a3):

> The evil person is impure (ἀκάθαρτος) in his soul, but the good person is pure (in his soul). It is not correct (ὀρθόν) for a good person or a god ever to receive gifts from one who is polluted (παρὰ μιαροῦ). Therefore the many efforts concerning gods are in vain for those 'religiously incorrect' (τοῖς ἀνοσίοις), but for all who are 'religiously correct' they are most opportune.[61]

Here, by extending the concept of 'purity' to the soul and by declaring that evil persons are 'impure in the soul', Plato is able to explain the rejection of their sacrifices through conventional Greek thought concerning pollution, that individuals who are polluted—normally in practised religion by sexual intercourse, attendance on the dead or at funerals, and murder[62]—are not to enter sanctuaries or perform cult acts, are 'religiously incorrect', and that any cult acts they do perform will not accomplish their purpose. By Plato's argument here, framed in religious language, the evil man is polluted, and this pollution explains why his cult activities, including sacrifice, are ineffective.

Plato may have taken the concept of the 'pollution of the soul' from Pythagorean doctrines.[63] According to Diodorus Siculus (10.9.6), Pythagoras had bid his followers, when they were sacrificing, 'not to approach the gods wearing expensive garments, but shiny, clean (καθαράς) ones. And likewise they were to have not only their body pure and clean (καθαρόν) of every unjust activity, but also their soul "pure"' (ἁγνεύουσαν). The deprecation of 'expensive' garments is in the tradition of the criticism of expensive sacrifices which we have also in Plato, Theopompus, and Theophrastus, but we see also in Pythagoras' injunction a concern for 'purity' at three levels: in the clothing, in the body, and in the soul. Purity and literal cleanliness of clothing and body on sacrificial occasions are common

[61] On this passage and its context, see Morrow, 1960: 399–400; Reverdin, 1945: 65; and below, pp. 153 and 248.

[62] See Parker, 1983.

[63] On Pythagoras and Pythagoreans on pollution, see ibid. 290–9.

elements of the Greek religious tradition, attested as far back as Homer, *Iliad* 6.266–8,[64] but noteworthy here is Pythagoras' addition 'of every unjust activity' of the body. That, presumably, goes beyond the pan-Hellenic concern for the pollution of homicide and may reflect attested Pythagorean doctrines that meat, mullets, eggs, beans, and a number of other such things pollute the body (D.L. 8.33–4). But truly innovative and first attested here is Pythagoras' requirement that the sacrificer must have a 'pure soul',[65] and Pythagoras thereby introduces proper moral status as one of the prerequisites for successful sacrifice, an innovation taken up, as we have seen, by Xenophon's Socrates and expressed in the same religious context by Plato in the *Laws*.

Theophrastus shares Pythagoras', Socrates', and Plato's view that, in sacrifices, 'the gods look to the character of those sacrificing' (frag. 7.52–4 [Pötscher]). But for him the proper condition of the mind and soul are not merely necessary attributes of the worshipper, but may themselves, metaphorically, become the offering. 'To the gods the finest first-fruit offering is a pure mind and an undisturbed soul' (*νοῦς καθαρὸς καὶ ψυχὴ ἀπαθής*), and the 'greatest sacrifice' (*μεγίστην θυσίαν*) the gods receive is the proper understanding (*τὴν ὀρθὴν διάληψιν*) about themselves and their affairs (frag. 8.18–21).[66] As for Pythagoras, for Theophrastus clean and pure clothing and body are required for cultic ritual but are not sufficient in the eyes

[64] See Parker, 1983: 19–20.

[65] Heraclitus (frag. *VS* 22 B 69) spoke of sacrifices by 'humans who are completely purified (*τῶν ἀποκεκαθαρμένων παντάπασιν ἀνθρώπων*) which might occur sometimes, but rarely, in the case of one or of a few easily counted men'. Most scholars take the 'purification' of these unique individuals to be an 'internal purification'—suggested by Diehl's translation 'innerlich vollständig gereinigten Menschen'—but the 'innerlich' is not to be found in the Heraclitean Greek. Heraclitus may well have meant that virtually no Greeks met even their own traditional requirements of freedom from pollution. But if, in fact, Heraclitus meant an 'inner purity' and linked it to sacrifice, he then may be the first to indicate concern for the 'morality' of those who sacrifice, but the typically opaque brevity of this Heraclitean fragment does not allow a firm conclusion. For discussion of the 'internal purity' here, see Meijer, 1981: 223–4. For doubts that the fragment should be attributed to Heraclitus, see Kahn, 1979: 288–9.

[66] The exact meanings of *νοῦς καθαρός* and *ψυχὴ ἀπαθής* are by no means clear. For attempts to understand them, see Meijer, 1981: 254–8. This statement, however, is uncharacteristic of the other certain fragments of Theophrastus' *On Piety* and may in fact be an intrusion of Porphyry's own thought. For the possible mixture of Theophrastan and Porphyrian elements in this fragment, see Obbink, 1988: 283.

of the gods. One must also have a pure soul, and in his statement of this Theophrastus describes popular, non-philosophical views (frag. 9.3–8):

People think that, if they dress an impure body in shining clothes, it is not sufficient for the purity of sacrifices (*τὸ τῶν θυσιῶν ἁγνόν*). But when they make their bodies clean and shiny together with their clothing but do not have a soul pure from evils, some think it makes no difference. It is as though they think the god does not find *charis* (*χαίροντα*) when the most divine part of us, the part that is kindred to them, is pure.

To judge from other evidence for popular religion, Theophrastus' claim that in matters of sacrifice worshippers were concerned with purity of clothing and body, that is, with the physical cleanliness of both and the body's freedom from the conventional forms of pollution, is accurate. Apart from the small cult of Pythagoreans, the requirement of purity of mind and soul in sacrificial matters developed within and remained within the philosophical tradition.[67]

The philosophic criticisms of sacrifice we have encountered thus far concern the use of them to persuade the gods to overlook injustices, the atmosphere in which the sacrifice is made (*euphemia*), expensive versus inexpensive offerings, and the moral status of the sacrificer. Cutting deeper into the Greek sacrificial tradition were questions raised about *what* should be sacrificed, specifically whether animals should be sacrificed as offerings to the gods, and these questions appear first not in the philosophical tradition but in cultic sects outside the religious mainstream. The Athenian lawgiver in Plato's *Laws* describes an early time when some Greeks did not sacrifice animals (6.782c1–d1):

We see that the practice of humans sacrificing one another still even now remains a practice for many. And we hear of the opposite among others, of a

[67] An epigram displayed in Asclepius' sanctuary at Epidaurus has long been taken to be the one piece of evidence that demonstrates that 'purity of thought' was also a feature of cultic religion as early as the fourth century: 'A man going into the fragrant temple must be pure (*ἁγνόν*). | This purity (*ἁγνεία*) is to think "religiously correct" thoughts (*φρονεῖν ὅσια*).' This epigram has been widely attributed to Theophrastus' *On Piety* as frag. 9.8–11, but now Bremmer, 2002 has conclusively shown that it is from Porphyry (*Abst.* 2.19.5), not from Theophrastus, and should be dated quite late, not before the first century BCE. See also Parker, 1983: 324.

time when people were not even daring to taste of a cow, and their sacrificial offerings to the gods were not animals but cakes and fruits wetted with honey and other such pure (*ἁγνά*) sacrifices. They kept away from meat because they thought it would not be 'religiously correct' (*ὅσιον*) to eat it or to pollute (*μιαίνειν*) the altars of the gods with blood. For some of us then there were lifestyles called 'Orphic', lifestyles which partook of all things without souls (*ἀψύχων*) but held back from all things with souls.[68]

Much about Orphism remains uncertain and murky, in good part because it is often treated as similar or identical to, or assimilated to and confused with Pythagoreanism in sources both ancient and modern. Burkert, however, gives certain elements of Orphism which are relevant to Plato's account and which, he claims, 'are likely to survive examination'.

> There were *'Ορφικά*, purported poems of Orpheus . . . including at least a theogony and cosmogony. . . . There were *'Ορφεοτελεσταί*, who with reference to these writings gave private initiations to mysteries, in which the punishments in store for the uninitiated in the next world were vividly depicted. For the initiates there was the *βίος 'Ορφικός* [Orphic Lifestyle], an ascetic life featuring special abstinences, and especially vegetarianism.[69]

In Plato's account the Orphics' avoidance of animal sacrifice follows naturally from their vegetarianism. They would neither eat nor sacrifice anything with a 'soul'. Animals, in this tradition, had 'souls', and the historical Pythagoras of Croton in South Italy apparently added a new element, metempsychosis, the transmigration of souls after death into both humans and animals.[70] One would assume that, if animals as well as humans had souls and that if some souls previously in humans were now in animals, the Pythagoreans would avoid animal sacrifice. But, it appears, under certain conditions Pythagoras and Pythagoreans did perform animal sacrifice. We have already seen that Pythagoras bid his followers, when they were sacrificing, 'not to approach the gods wearing expensive garments,

[68] That Plato here terms the alternative sacrifices 'pure' and writes of 'daring to taste of a cow' may suggest that he personally shared these views of animal sacrifice, but nothing else in his voluminous writings indicates this. He may well just be describing such sacrifices in the terms their contemporary proponents did, as we shall soon see.

[69] Burkert, 1972: 125. See also Edmonds, 1999 and Parker, 1995: esp. 501–4.

[70] Burkert, 1972: 133–7.

but shiny, clean ones'. Pythagoras himself is also reported to have sacrificed an ox to celebrate a geometric discovery.[71] The inherent contradiction between metempsychosis and animal sacrifice was resolved in various ways by Pythagoras and later Pythagoreans: that Pythagoreans would just 'taste' part of the animal (Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.28) or, more interestingly, that 'the only animals into which the souls of men do not enter are those which may, according to sacred law, be sacrificed. Therefore, those who are allowed to eat meat may eat only of those animals that may be sacrificed.' [72]

In his *Katharmoi* Empedocles of Agrigentum (*c.*492–432) shares with the Pythagoreans a belief in the transmigration of souls from one animal form to another, from one creature having a soul to another, but he carries it to its logical conclusion in terms of sacrifice. He bids his readers to see that, in sacrificing animals, they were foolishly killing and devouring one another (frag. *VS* 31 B 136). He vividly describes how, in sacrificing an animal, a father might be killing and feasting upon his deceased son, or a son on his father, or children on their mother (frag. 137). To contrast with these current, abominable practices Empedocles imagines a much earlier time, a uniquely Empedoclean golden age ruled by Aphrodite (frag. 128):

These people did not have a god Ares or Kudoimos[73]
or Zeus Basileus, Cronus, or Poseidon.
The Cyprian (Aphrodite) was their queen.
They propitiated her with 'properly respectful' (εὐσεβέεσσι) dedications,
painted animals and perfumes of elaborate fragrances,
and with sacrifices of myrrh and fragrant incense,
and they cast onto the ground libations of honey.
Aphrodite's altar was not wet by the pure blood of bulls,
but it was among humans the greatest pollution (μῦσος)
to tear out a life spirit (θυμός) and eat the good limbs.

[71] D.L. 8.12 and Porph., *VP* 36. For more on Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans on sacrifice, see Iambl., *VP* 54, 82, 85, and 99–100.

[72] Porphyry, *Abst.* 1.26 and Iambl., *VP* 85, translation by Burkert, 1972: 182, on whom see these and other accommodations to sacrifice of animals by Pythagoreans (180–3). According to Aristoxenus (frag. 29a [Wehrli] = D.L. 8.20), Pythagoras himself tolerated all meat but ram and plough oxen.

[73] Kudoimos = Din of Battle, here, as in *Il.* 5.593 and 18.535, personified.

Here Empedocles, in a significant remodelling of Hesiodic cosmology and theology, has Aphrodite (Love) exist and rule alone before the militaristic, combative male gods Ares, Kudoimos, Zeus, Cronus, and Poseidon came to be. He makes cult acts reflect the pacific nature of this goddess and her golden age. Pictures of animals, not the animals themselves, were dedicated to the goddess.[74] Sacrifices were of myrrh and incense. Animal sacrifice was not only not a conventional practice, it brought the greatest pollution. Only with the appearance of deities of war and strife came the killing of animals as socially acceptable ways to honour the gods. And the import is, of course, that one should return to the practices of Aphrodite's golden age.

Plato's discussion of vegetarianism and abstention from animal sacrifice in *Laws* 6.782c1–d1 indicates that he was familiar with theories of the type put forward by Pythagoras and Empedocles, and Plato also, at least through myths, imagined a metempsychosis by which in a rebirth souls once in humans entered animals (*Rep.* 10.618a1–3 and 620a3–d5, *Phdr.* 249b1–5, and *Ti.* 92c1–3). It is noteworthy that, despite this, he chose to support animal sacrifice. Nor do we find in Plato anticipation of or interest in any one of the many arguments which Theophrastus a few years later raised in his all-out attack on animal sacrifice. Theophrastus' attacks are so important in the later philosophical tradition, so revealing of at least some philosophical attitudes towards sacrifice, and so intrinsically interesting that I include a full discussion of them here.

In his book *On Piety*,[75] Theophrastus (*c.*372–288) mounted a full-scale assault on animal sacrifice, bringing to bear on his subject a wide range of historical, philosophical, and philological arguments. Whereas Empedocles had created a mythical golden age without animal sacrifice, Theophrastus, in anthropological fashion, takes sacrifice back to its

[74] Philostratus (*VA* 1.1.) claims that Empedocles sacrificed at Olympia not a real bull but a pastry one. For more on this bull and its ingredients, see *VS* 31 A 11 = Ath. 1.5e and D.L. 8.53.

[75] On the attribution of the fragments of *On Piety*, and especially the uncertainty about frag. 8, see Ch. 2, n. 40. For a full account of Theophrastus' theory of the development of sacrifice, of the methodology and philosophical background behind it, and of the modern scholarly questions about it, see Obbink, 1988. On many of the elements discussed here, and especially the emphasis on 'continual piety', see Meijer, 1981: 250–9.

very beginnings among the Egyptians and then traces its development and expansion in eight stages, a development which finally leads to the animal sacrifice he detests.

Stage 1: Burned offerings of grass. The Egyptians, renowned for their wisdom and the sacredness of their land, first sacrificed[76] grass to the gods. They burned the grass—the leaves, the roots, and all the shoots. With this sacrifice they greeted (δεξιούμενοι) the gods appearing in the sky (frag. 2.1–12). It is in the Greek tradition that Theophrastus imagines even this first, very simple grass offering as burned. His interest, in fact, is more in the fire than in the offering. The Egyptians, he claims, were with fire 'making everlasting' the honours for their gods and were keeping an undying, immortal fire in their sanctuaries. They were doing this because fire was most similar in nature to the fiery celestial deities (frag. 2.12–14). Whatever Theophrastus may have imagined to be the relative importance of the fire and the grass, here at Stage 1 he is establishing fire as core to the sacrificial practice, as it was in practised Greek religion.

Stage 2: Acorns and oak leaves. 'The earth first produced grasses, and then trees. Humans ate the fruit of the oak tree first, and they then burned in sacrifices to the gods small bits of the fruit—because food was scarce—but more of the leaves' (frag. 2.22–5). From the surviving fragments it appears that Theophrastus in Stage 1 did not have his early Egyptians eating the grass or imagining that they were offering bits of their own food to the gods. If that is true, then with the acorn sacrifices of Stage 2 humans for the first time make to the gods first-fruit offerings (ἀπαρχαί) of foods they consumed themselves. They also, because the acorns were so few and vital to their needs, for the first time made 'symbolic' offerings—the leaves of the oak tree—which were meant to represent the acorns they would have offered if they could have spared them.

Stage 3: Barleycorns. Demeter's gift of barley then became available, and humans poured the whole barleycorns over the first offerings, presumably those of Stage 1 and 2 (frag. 2.26–8). Here barleycorns are part of humans' now 'domesticated' sustenance (τὴν ἥμερον τροφήν),

[76] For Theophrastus all the offerings in all stages are burned. They are, for him, θυσίαι, which I translate consistently as 'sacrifices'. Some are also ἀπαρχαί, that is, 'first-fruit offerings', offerings of portions of successful harvest.

and such offerings should be seen, as the acorns in Stage 2, as first-fruits of their own food. New here is that the barleycorns were not themselves a self-standing offering but were an accessory to other offerings.

Stage 4: Barley meal. Humans then learned to grind the barleycorns into meal for their food, and they put the barley meal into the fire as first-fruits for the gods. Innovative here is that they hid the grinding tools away in secret and treated them as sacred (frag. 2.29–33).

Stage 5: Cakes. When wheat appeared and it and barley became abundant, humans made cakes and such things and used them as first-fruit offerings to the gods. Again, humans are offering portions of what they themselves eat (frag. 2.36–8).

Stage 6: Flowers and similar things. Humans are now gathering flowers and making bouquets of those things they found beautiful and appropriately fragrant for the 'divine perception' (*πρὸς θείαν αἴσθησιν*). The flowers they made into wreaths to wear themselves, the other things they put into the fire (frag. 2.39–41). Here, for the first time, Theophrastus has humans sacrificing objects whose purpose is solely to appeal to the aesthetic sensibilities of the gods, and in particular to their sense of smell. The emphasis on the gods' sense of smell here may be related to the common Greek conception that what reached and pleased gods from animal sacrifices was the 'savour' (*κνίση*) of the burning meat.

Stage 7: Libations of honey, olive oil, and wine. Humans, apparently at the same time as Stage 6, discovered the uses of wine, honey, and olive, and offered first-fruits of them to the gods responsible for each (frag. 2.39–43). For the first time Theophrastus has his sacrificers distinguish among the gods, making, presumably, offerings of olive oil to Athena and of wine to Dionysus. In this fragment Theophrastus treats as contemporaneous the introduction of libations of wine, honey, and olive oil, but elsewhere he gives them a chronological development, with libations of water first, then those of honey, then of olive oil, and lastly of wine (frag. 12.1–5), each requiring increasingly sophisticated means of production.

Before we introduce the eighth and final stage, that of animal sacrifice, we should note that all the offerings of Stages 1–7 are fruits of the earth (*καρποί*). 'From the beginning sacrifices of the fruits of the earth occurred for the gods' (frag. 13.15–16). 'From fruits of the

earth they were honouring each of the gods' (frag. 13.40), and, 'Each person who gives as first-fruits pure (ἁγνά) sacrifices to the divine finds "religious correctness" and benefit from the gods. Greatest and first of all is the sacrifice of the fruits of the earth, and this sacrifice alone should one make as a first-fruit offering to the gods and to the earth that sends up these fruits' (frag. 19.1–5). These offerings need not be large. People offer, before dining, as first-fruits to the gods a small part of the food that is served to them everyday, and, in Theophrastus' view, 'there is certainly in this small bit some great honour' (τιμή, frag. 9.12–15). For Theophrastus all such first-fruit offerings of the earth's produce are good in comparison to animal sacrifice, but he treats the successive stages even of these as advances into violation of tradition (παρανομία, frag. 2.47–8). The original practices, the *nomos* that was being violated, conceivably could be the grass offerings of the Egyptians in Stage 1, but Theophrastus speaks approvingly of the 'ancestral practices' recommended by Apollo, that is 'the old custom' (τὸ δὲ παλαιὸν ἔθος) of honouring the gods with cakes and fruits of the earth (frag. 8.1–3). That is apparently his *nomos* from which later sacrifices diverge.

Theophrastus seemingly has designed his seven stages of sacrifices of fruits of the earth with careful attention to religious practices of his Greek contemporaries. Stage 1 is the most hypothetical and un-Greek of the seven stages. Grass was not food or sacrificial offering for the Greeks, and the idea of sacrificing to the celestial deities (sun, moon, and planets) which Theophrastus attributes to the Egyptians was a product of Greek philosophical theory, not of popular religious practice.[77] But the burning of offerings was a core practice even if the claim that fire *qua* fire was sacred and why it was so comes from the philosophical tradition. Stage 1, however, is valuable in that it introduces two key points: offerings should be made of the fruit of the earth and they should be burned. For Stage 2, with the appearance of trees and their fruits, he chooses among many possibilities the oak tree and acorn. Why these? It is quite likely because there was a tradition, antedating Theophrastus, that acorns were one of the first foods for humans, coming before the discovery of 'Demeter's

[77] For Theophrastus' interest in the celestial bodies as deities, see Obbink, 1988: 274 and 288 n. 23. See also Introduction, pp. 19–22.

fruits'.[78] The barleycorns of Stage 3 are similarly not random. They were commonly sprinkled over animals to be sacrificed, as in the ritual described in Homer (for example, *Od.* 3.436–63), and so were, as Theophrastus describes them, accessory to the previous sacrifices. In fact, most of the offerings described in Stages 3–7 are accessory, in that they were components in the fully developed ritual of animal sacrifice.[79] The barley meal of Stage 4 was still in Theophrastus' time offered to the gods (frag. 2.33–4) as a part of sacrifices, as may be seen also in his story of the man from Hermione, and the seclusion and sacredness of the grinding tools suggests mystery cult—perhaps even that of Eleusis.[80] The cakes of Stage 5 were also regular offerings in classical times, as seen in Theopompus' story of Clearchus. The flower wreaths of Stage 6 were regular features of dress for sacrificers throughout the Greek tradition, and the other things burned on the altar at this Stage probably functioned as incense.[81] And, finally, libations, particularly of wine—the last in Theophrastus' succession of libations—were regularly poured over the burning offerings.[82] Theophrastus has thus, to a degree, drawn his history of sacrificial practice from contemporary practices, and the result is that he then is able to claim as proof of the accuracy of his scheme many of the same practices surviving in the rituals of his own time, as in the procession and sacrifice for Helios and the Horae in Athens (frag. 2.43–7).[83]

Stage 8: Animal sacrifice. 'The cause of the sacrifice of fruits of the earth was good *charis* (εὐχάριστον), but that of the sacrifices of animals was circumstances of famine or some other misfortune' (frag. 4.2–3). In a time of famine humans, neglecting 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης),

[78] See Pausanias 8.1.5–6 and *RE* s.v. Eiche, col. 2067 (Olck). I owe this observation to Robert Parker.

[79] Obbink, 1988: 277: 'Each stage in the evolution of ritual procedure is partially retained in subsequent stages, and continues to be reenacted side by side with newer, more complex forms of veneration.'

[80] Obbink, 1988: 289 n. 34.

[81] For the introduction of real incense, not clearly specified in time, see frag. 2.4–7.

[82] For the importance of Theophrastus' theory of the sequence of types of libation to modern scholarship and for the uses of the various types of libation, with the argument that specific types of libation indicate normality (wine mixed with water) or liminality or abnormal offerings such as those for the dead (water, milk, honey mixed with water or milk, and pure wine), see Graf, 1980. Specifically on 'wineless' libations and offerings, see Henrichs, 1983.

[83] Cf. frag. 2.20–2 and 34–6.

turned to eating the flesh of one another and, supplicating the divine (ἱκετεύοντες τὸ δαιμόνιον) with many prayers, offered first-fruits of themselves to the gods. Later they made the bodies of other animals a substitute for their own bodies for sacrifices. Then, wishing to give due honour to the sacrifices to the gods, they were led to eat a portion of these, and the eating of animals was added to their food from the fruits of the earth. And just as long ago they had given first-fruit offerings of the fruits of the earth to the gods and then gladly eaten some of these after the sacrifice, so now after making first-fruit offerings of animals, they thought they should eat a portion of them (frag. 13.15–40; cf. frag. 2.50–1 and 6.4–5). But, according to Theophrastus, when the famine ended, humans should have reverted, for both their own food and sacrifices, to the fruits of the earth (frag. 7.1–4). Apollo advised to sacrifice according to ancestral conventions (κατὰ τὰ πάτρια), and that meant to Theophrastus through cakes and the fruits of the earth (frag. 8.1–3). The reason humans did not do this, however, is quite simple: they liked the taste of meat, and they enjoyed the portions they received in animal sacrifices they made to the gods (frag. 13.27–34). Greeks sacrifice animals because of their own enjoyment of the banquets they provide, not from a concern for the gods. They do not sacrifice animals that do not provide such pleasures, such as snakes, scorpions, and the like. They sacrifice rather cattle, sheep, deer, pigs, and birds, and then persist in such sacrifices because of their own pleasure (frag. 12.64–83; cf. frag. 3.21–2).

As with the various offerings of the fruits of the earth, Theophrastus found examples—though few and remote—of contemporary survivals of human sacrifice in the rites of Zeus Lykaios of Arcadia and of Cronus at Carthage (frag. 13.22–3).[84] One might have expected Theophratus to have, instead of the sequence fruits–humans–animals, the sequence fruits–animals–humans, but by having human cannibalism and sacrifice as the origin of the animal sacrifice he accomplishes two purposes: he makes animal sacrifice all the more horrific and he ends with current practices.

[84] For these and another example of human sacrifice, see [Pl.] *Minos* 315b8–c5. On the unlikelihood that the Greeks ever really practised human sacrifice, see Henrichs, 1981. The sacrifice of the young Persians by the Greeks before the battle of Salamis, reported in Plutarch *Them.* 13.2–3, *Pelop.* 21.3, and *Arist.* 9.1–2, may be an exception. See Mikalson, 2003: 78–9 and 215–16 nn. 253–60.

For 'most' Greeks Theophrastus offers this generalized account of the beginnings of animal killing and sacrifice, but for the Athenians, whose local traditions he knows so well, he gives a quite different and more detailed and nuanced account (frag. 4.3–10):

> Most of the animal killings among the Athenians had their beginnings in ignorance, anger, or fear. They attribute the killing of pigs to the error of Clymene who unintentionally struck and killed a pig. Her husband was cautious, thinking she had performed an act 'contrary to convention' (*παράνομον*), and went to Delphi and consulted the oracle of the god. Because the god allowed what had happened, Clymene's husband in the future considered what had happened a matter of indifference.

Similarly the Athenians killed the first goat in Icarion because it 'cut down' (*ἀπέθρισε*) a vine (frag. 5.1–2).[85] The killing of the first plough ox in Athens, done in anger, was the *aition* for the elaborate and still current rituals of the Bouphonia which Theophrastus fully describes (frag. 18). For the Athenians, at least, Theophrastus has the first killing of each type of animal set and explained in a cultic, mythical past and, apparently, attended by some form of expiation ritual. And, Theophrastus adds, other Greeks offered different causes for their killing of animals (frag. 6.1–2), suggesting that they had myths similar to those of the Athenians.

In the few surviving fragments of his *On Piety* Theophrastus offers a number of arguments for the superiority of offerings of fruits of the earth over those of animals, including the following:

1. In sacrifice we take from plants their produce, not their lives. Plants willingly give up their produce, even voluntarily letting it drop if we leave them alone. We sow, plant, and tend plants, and therefore when we offer to the gods their produce we are giving something of ours, something we helped create. Also, fruits of the earth, unlike animals, are cheap, plentiful, and easily provided, and thus are readily available to individuals for the 'continual proper respect' which Theophrastus values. Honey, too, is an appropriate sacrifice because humans tend bees and contribute to its production, no harm comes to the bees, and the honey is useless to them (frag. 7.21–35).

[85] There was a major cult centre of Dionysus at Icarion, the goat and vine were often associated with Dionysus, and the whole myth, if we had it, must have been in the context of the Dionysus cult there.

2. We ought to sacrifice those things with which, when we sacrifice, we harm no one. A sacrifice ought to be harmless to all, but one harms animals by taking their lives.

3. A sacrifice is 'religiously correct', but no person is 'religiously correct' who gives gifts not from his own property but from others', whether he takes fruits of the earth or plants when the owner does not wish it. How is it 'religiously correct' when those who are being robbed are being treated unjustly? A life is more valuable than the fruits of the earth, and if one takes away the life from an animal and offers it to a god, the wrong is even greater (frag. 7.14–21).

4. Animals are of two types: those that by nature are harmful and unjust towards us, and those that by nature do no wrong or harm to us. One should not offer to the gods an animal that is evil and harmful anymore than one that is maimed. These would be first-fruits of evil. And to kill an animal that does us no harm is unjust, and sacrifice should not be an act of injustice. Therefore neither type of animal should be sacrificed (frag. 12.27–42).

5. To those who have created for us the greatest goods we must give the greatest returns from the most valuable things, especially if the gods are responsible for these things. The finest and most valuable things the gods create for us are the fruits of the earth, and so with these we must honour them (frag. 7.4–10).

Theophrastus' many criticisms of animal sacrifice were taken up by some in the philosophical tradition, as, for example, Porphyry, who in the third century CE used his arguments in defence of Neo-Pythagorean vegetarianism,[86] but the very nature of his *On Piety* indicates that he is arguing against a tradition firmly entrenched in his own time.[87]

[86] For others, see Obbink, 1988: 273 and 286 nn. 6 and 7.

[87] Cf. ibid. 285: 'The terse social and philosophical criticism in *On Piety* is clearly directed toward a stage of contemporary culture which took for granted the legitimacy of that practice. The thesis of the treatise and most of its arguments would be pointless before an audience which already broadly regarded animal sacrifice as objectionable . . . In the treatise as preserved Theophrastus cites no single historical instance of aversion or abstention from blood sacrifice. It seems likely that in his view there were none to be named.'

Plato's and others' criticisms of sacrificial practices we have surveyed may not have had an effect on the religious practice of their times, but we can draw from them some valuable indications of traditional Greek conceptions of sacrifice, and, in a general summary, can combine these with the non-polemical treatments of sacrifice discussed earlier in this chapter. First of all, sacrifice is a given of human life, practised by virtually everyone and neglected at great peril. It is a 'given' by *nomoi*, human conventions and laws, not by *physis*, nature, but these *nomoi* are motivated and ratified by divine revelation in the form of omens and oracles. When sacrifices are made in accordance with these *nomoi*, they result in benefits for mankind. Sacrifices are 'gifts' to the gods, gifts which honour them, and these 'gifts' are given in the context of *charis*, that is, they are 'pleasing favours' which are expected to be repaid, in some form, and they establish with the deity a *charis* relationship, the mutual exchange of favours. From Theophrastus we learn that sacrifices are primarily offerings burned on an altar, and they are mostly 'first-fruit offerings', that is, a portion of the goods, usually food, that humans receive from the gods. Humans are entitled to the use and enjoyment of the whole from which the first-fruits have been taken. Essential to the success of sacrifices are cleanliness of the clothes of the worshippers and the cleanliness and freedom from pollution of their bodies.

To this description of sacrifice—which reflects Greek traditional concepts and practices but is not so fully articulated outside the philosophical tradition—we may add some elements found only within that tradition. For example, the explicit emphasis on 'continual proper respect', the importance of regular, even daily offerings to the gods, is unique to Theophrastus, but is implicit in the Clearchus story, in the many sacrificial calendars of the Greek cities, and in the sacrificial programmes that Plato and Aristotle create for their utopian societies. Also more clear in this philosophical tradition is the human analogy of honours owed to the gods. Theophrastus claims that 'just as we think we must make first-fruit offerings to good men, so we think we must make them also to the gods' (frag. 12.44–5). For Aristotle, 'it is not possible (to return equal value) in all matters, as, for example, in honours towards the gods and parents'. Both should be served to the limit of one's means (*EN* 8.1163b15–18). Finally, Theophrastus gives a valuable indication of the proper 'attitude'

when making a sacrifice: 'First-fruits should not be made as though it were some secondary affair (*παρέργως*), but with all eagerness (*σὺν πάσῃ προθυμίᾳ*)' (frag. 8.21–3).

When we look to the societies that Plato and Aristotle create, we find that sacrifices have a major role and that these sacrifices are often performed in the context of religious festivals (*heortai*). Such festivals with their various hymns and games developed around sacrifices to major deities in all Greek city states. In a religious sense the sacrifices remained central, and it is that aspect of the festivals we treat here. In the next section, Religious Festivals, we discuss the manifold other aspects of such festivals.

Plato in the *Laws* creates the fullest programme of such sacrifices and festivals. There are to be in his new city 365 sacrifices, 'so that at least one official may always be sacrificing to one of the gods or *daimones* on behalf of the city, its people, and their property' (8.828a7–b3). Here and throughout the *Laws* the 'continual proper respect' promoted by Theophrastus at the private level is raised to the state level. Plato divided the 5,040 landowners/citizens of his city into twelve equal tribes, each of *c.*420 members. Each tribe was allotted to one of the twelve gods and was named after its god. Each tribe, in turn, was divided into twelve units, and each unit was 'sacred to' and named after one distinct god or hero. There are thus, for the tribes and their divisions, 156 separate deities, each with its own altar and other accoutrements. Each month each tribe sacrificed to its own eponymous deity, and each month the state as a whole sacrificed for one of the tribal heroes. Each of the twelve units of each tribe presumably also sacrificed to its deity, probably each month. The monthly sacrifices to the tribal heroes by the state were to be accompanied by choruses and musical and athletic contests appropriate to the individual gods and the seasons of the year. At this state level there were to be also women's festivals, some attended by men, some not. Sacrifices and festivals of the chthonic gods were to be kept separate from those of ouranic gods and held in the twelfth month, that of Pluton.[88]

[88] *Lg.* 5.738d1–e2, 745d5–e1, 6.771a6–c1 and d1–e1, and 8.828b7–d1. On the relationship between the sacrifices of the state, tribe, and the tribe's units, see Morrow, 1960: 123 and 354 n. 194 and Reverdin, 1945: 63–4.

These sacrifices were *first* for the sake of the *charis* of the gods and for things concerning the gods, and secondly so that the residents could get to know one another. For Plato's lawgiver there is no greater good for a city than that the citizens, on these sacrificial occasions, come to know one another, to know who is honest and truthful and deserves honour and office and who does not (*Lg.* 5.738d7–e8). On sacrificial occasions Plato's citizens develop an almost family-style relationship (οἰκειότητός τε πέρι καὶ γνωρίσεως ἀλλήλων...καὶ ὁμιλίας ἕνεκα πάσης (6.771d1–e1; cf. 5.738d1–e2)). Aristotle adds that those who make sacrifices and festivals are 'giving honours' to the gods and providing pleasurable relaxations to themselves.[89] As an indication of this he offers the fact that 'the old sacrifices and festivals appear to come after the harvests, as first-fruit offerings, when men most had spare time' (*EN* 8.1160a23–8).[90] The recurring sacrifices and festivals were thus times for relaxation and getting to know one's neighbours and fellow citizens, but both Plato and Aristotle keep as their first purpose giving due honours to the gods.

Plato employed occasional (vs. periodically recurring) sacrifices for a number of purposes, especially to sanctify and make unchangeable critical elements of his new societies. He has his lawgiver labour long and hard over determining the forms of song and dance appropriate for the gods, and then, when they are established, he has them consecrated (καθιερῶσαι) by sacrifices and libations made by all the citizens to the Moirai and all the other gods (*Lg.* 7.799a4–b4). Similarly each landholder is never to sell his allotment of land since it is part of the sacred earth belonging to all the gods, and the priests and priestesses are to make vows (εὐχάς) over a series of three sacrifices that a person who sells or buys an allotment will suffer the appropriate punishments (5.741c1–6). Proper, state-sanctioned marriages were also critical to Plato's cities in both the *Republic* and the *Laws*, and he has them validated by sacrifices as well as prayers.[91]

[89] Cf. Pericles in the Funeral Oration in Thuc. 2.38.1.

[90] In commenting on this passage Parker (2005*a*: 207) notes what he claims to be the apparent lack of harvest festivals in Attica.

[91] *Rep.* 5.459e6–460a1 and 461a3–b1; *Lg.* 6.784a7–b1 and 8.841d2–3, and above, pp. 52–3. The marriages in the *Laws* and *Republic* are part of Plato's programme of eugenics, to produce the 'right sort' of children, and that brings to mind Diogenes' comment, upon seeing people sacrificing to the gods to have a son: 'Do you not sacrifice about what kind of person your son will turn out to be?' (frag. V B 343 [G] = D.L. 6.63).

Other, miscellaneous uses of sacrifice also occur. In order to limit attendance as much as possible if 'bad myths' about gods such as Ouranus, Cronus, and Zeus had to be told, Plato would require the sacrifice of a large and hard-to-provide victim, not just a pig (*Rep.* 2.378a4–6).[92] For Aristotle, oligarchs should, when entering office, make grand (μεγαλοπρεπεῖς) sacrifices so that the people, sharing in the feasts, may happily see this form of government enduring (*Pol.* 6.1321a35–40). And, finally, for Plato, adults' sacrifices, like their prayers, taught the young people to believe in the gods (*Lg.* 10.887d5–e7), and these sacrifices, like other cult acts, contributed to the *eudaimon* life (4.716d6–e1).

The author of the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, often but mistakenly identified with Aristotle in antiquity but clearly of about the same time period,[93] offers a valuable pot-pourri of arguments and statements about sacrifices and other religious rites that an orator might make in public speeches. The arguments he suggests and his definition of the 'perfect sacrifice' in the penultimate paragraph offer an interesting complement, at the public, popular level, to the philosophical treatments of sacrifice we have been discussing, revealing that many of the issues that the philosophers were addressing were also of concern to the general public of the time, and, so, this lengthy, neglected account serves well both to conclude our discussion of sacrifice and to introduce our next topic, religious festivals (1423a30–1424a8):

> Concerning 'sacred things' (ἱερῶν) it is necessary to speak in three ways: For we shall say that we must guard carefully the established ones, or that we must change them to be more grand, or to be more humble. When we say that we must guard carefully the existing ones, we will find starting points (for our arguments) *from what is just*, saying that among all people it is unjust to transgress the ancestral customs (τὰ πάτρια ἔθη) and that all the oracles order humans to sacrifice according to the ancestral customs, and

[92] A pig sacrifice preceded the City Dionysia in Athens where such myths were 'retold'. This might also be a reference to the pig sacrifice required of all those participating in the Eleusinian Mysteries.

[93] Chiron, 2007, dates it to about 340 BCE and is inclined to accept its common ascription to Anaximenes of Lampsacus (380–320 BCE). The author's viewpoint is, Chiron claims (p. 92), 'definitely that of a Greek man living in the city of Athens or teaching in Athens'.

that it is necessary that there remain the attention to the gods that those who first founded cities and established the sacred rites (τὰ ἱερά) had; *from what is advantageous*, saying that in terms of taxes it will be advantageous for the private citizen or the community of the city when the victims (τὰ ἱερά) are sacrificed according to ancestral customs and that the citizens will profit in terms of courage since the citizens would feel honoured and more courageous when the hoplites, cavalrymen, and light-armed troops escort them in processions; *from what is beautiful*, if the result is that the festivals are made splendid; *from pleasure*, if there is some elaboration directed towards spectacle concerning the sacrifices of the gods; *from what is practical*, if there has been neither a deficiency nor an excess in these sacrifices. When we speak in favour of the existing sacred things, so must we proceed and examine them from what has been said or from similar things, and examine how it is possible to teach people about what is being said.

But when we are advising to change the rituals (ἱεροποιίας) to make them grander, we will have plausible starting points for disturbing ancestral customs by saying that to add to existing ones is not to destroy but to augment them; secondly, that it is reasonable that the gods are better intentioned to those who honour them more; thirdly, that not even our fathers held their sacrifices always in the same way but rather, looking at current conditions and their successes, were establishing in law the 'service' towards the gods both individually and communally; and, fourthly, just as in all other things, so in this way we manage our cities and private estates. And say also that, when these (new) things have been done, there will be some benefit or splendour or pleasure for the city, pursuing the topic just as has been described in the previous cases.

When we are reducing the sacred things so that they become more humble, one must bring the argument back to current circumstances, that is, why the citizens are more poorly off than before; secondly, that it is not reasonable that the gods find *charis* in the cost of the animals sacrificed but in the demonstrations of 'proper respect' (ταῖς εὐσεβείαις) of those who are sacrificing; thirdly, that both gods and men judge foolish those who do what is beyond their means; fourthly, that matters about civil expenses depend not only on humans but also on successes and failures.

These starting points and ones similar to them we will have for proposals about sacrifices. But so that we may know how to introduce and establish in law things about the best sacrifice (τὴν κρατίστην θυσίαν), let us define also this. The best sacrifice of all is one which would be 'religiously correct' (ὁσίως) concerning the gods, moderate in terms of costs, beneficial for war, and splendid for the spectacles. And it will be 'religiously correct' concerning the gods if ancestral customs are not done away with, and

moderate in expenses if not all the things sent in the procession are used up, and splendid for spectacles if someone uses in abundance gold and such things which are not used up, and beneficial against the enemy if fully equipped cavalrymen and hoplites join the procession.

From these things we will prepare best the things concerning the gods, and from what has been said before we will know the ways in which it is possible to speak publicly about each religious ritual.

RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

The gods, pitying the race of humans that was by nature subject to hard labour, arranged for them as respites from their labours the recompense of festivals (ἑορταί) and gave them as fellow-festival-celebrators (συνεορταστάς) the Muses, Apollo Musegetes, and Dionysus so that they might be 'corrected' (ἐπανορθῶνται),[94] and also the sustenance (τροφάς) that occurs in the festivals with the gods.[95] (Plato, *Laws* 2.653c9–d5)

In the *Laws* Plato's lawgiver claims that the Muses and Apollo Musegetes, as we shall see, look to the elements of song and dance in the festivals, while Dionysus represents one specific type of festival activity and atmosphere. The 'sustenance' points to the banquets commonly associated with festivals. The association of ἑορτή and banquet was so close that Plato in colloquial language can treat the two as virtually synonymous (*Rep.* 5.458a1–2; *Grg.* 447a3–5). But the gods' primary purpose, according to Plato, is to provide humans relaxation from their laborious life, and this idea appears already in the fifth century, in quotations from Democritus ('A life without a festival is a long journey without a hotel' [frag. *VS* 68 B 230]), and Antiphon ('Disease is a festival for the worthless people', because, we are told, 'they then do not go out to their work' [frag. *VS* 87 B 57]). This is, of course, most famously expressed for Athens by Pericles in the Funeral Oration Thucydides gives him: 'We provided also most

[94] The 'correction' of individuals through festivals here reflects Plato's use of them, to be described later, for educational purposes. See Mikalson, 1982: 215 n. 13 and Morrow, 1960: 353.

[95] Cf. 2.665a3–6. On the nature of festivals in both practised cult and literary and philosophical traditions, see Mikalson, 1982. On the festivals of the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 352–89 and Reverdin, 1945: 62–5, 69–88.

respites of labours for the mind by customarily having contests and sacrifices throughout the year' (2.38.1).

The festivals of Plato's Cretan city, like those of every Greek city, were to be of a varied character, with different gods worshipped at different times of the year and with different dances, songs, and contests.[96] Plato has his lawgiver stress that in the design of festivals both humans and gods have their roles. The choral contests of the festivals, like the festivals themselves, are fitted into the scheme of the days, months, and years assigned to the gods, and they are to be biennial, quadrennial, or 'in whatever way they are distributed when the gods give an idea (*ἔννοιαν*) about their arrangement' (*Lg.* 8.834e4–835a1). The god and *daimon* will also suggest (*ὑποθήσεσθαι*) other arrangements: for which gods they should hold sacrifices and choral dances so that, by 'playing' and propitiating (*ἱλεούμενοι*) the gods, they may pass through life in accordance with the way of nature (7.804a5–b3). Lawgivers distribute the contests befitting each sacrifice at the fitting time. The contests, unlike the sacrifices, can be arranged or changed by the lawgivers without any great loss to the city, but those matters which do make a difference and are difficult to convince the people of are the god's work, if somehow it is possible for the arrangements to come from him. If not, one must turn to a wise and bold citizen to make such arrangements (8.835b3–c8). Dance is similarly regulated, with the guardian of the laws establishing the correct forms and assigning which is appropriate for each of the sacrifices. He is then to consecrate the arrangement so that nothing related to song or dance can be changed, and then the city and its citizens, having the same 'pleasures', can 'live well and in a *eudaimon* way' (7.816c1–d2).[97] And among the useful information that every child should be taught is the arrangement of days into the cycles of months and of months into each year so that the seasons, sacrifices, and festivals, when they each receive what befits them by

[96] The marriage festivals with their sacrifices and hymns established by law in the *Republic* (5.459e6–460a1) are a product of Plato's idiosyncratic plan for eugenic mating.

[97] Cf. 7.812e10–813a3. For Aristotle, 'public feasts' (*δημοθοινίαι*) and 'festival gatherings' (*πανηγύρεις*) are under the law of the city (*Mu.* 400b21).

being celebrated at the correct time of year[98] and when they keep the city alive and awake,[99] may give to the gods their honours and may make men more understanding of these matters (*Lg.* 7.809d1–7). The timing and many arrangements of festivals, like those of sacrifices, were thus owed ultimately to divine revelation, probably through divination. Festivals are thus calendrically regulated and divinely sanctioned times of relaxation from everyday labours, but their ultimate purpose is to honour the gods and make them 'propitious' and thereby to make human life good and *eudaimon*.

Central to the concept of festival is the element of 'play' (παιδιά), but in Plato it is always mixed with religious and other serious purposes. In peacetime, Plato's lawgiver asserts, 'one must live "playing some play", sacrificing, singing, and dancing, so that it is possible to make the gods propitious (ἵλεως) to himself and to ward off the enemy and defeat him in battle' (*Lg.* 7.803e1–4; cf. 804a4–b4). Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* (2.1380b2–5) gives an indication of humans' feelings in festivals by the other human states with which he links them: unlike 'angry' men, 'men may be gentle (πρᾶοι), as when in play, in laughter, in a festival, in prosperity and good health, in success, in satiety, and in general in freedom from pain, in pleasure that is not insolent (μὴ ὑβριστικῇ), and in (morally) good hopes'. And Epicurus claims that the wise man would 'delight in' (εὐφρανθήσεσθαι) the spectacles (θεωρίαις) of festivals more than would others (frag. 593 [Usener] = D.L. 10.120).[100]

At the opening of the *Republic* Socrates tells how the day before he had gone to Piraeus for the festival of the Thracian goddess Bendis. It was a festival jointly celebrated by local Athenians and Thracian resident aliens. Socrates went 'to pray to the goddess and at the same time wishing to "see" how they would make the festival since they were holding it for the first time' (1.327a1–b1). Apart from the

[98] With τῷ κατὰ φύσιν ἄγεσθαι, 'by being held according to nature', Plato probably meant that, by proper calendric knowledge, spring sacrifices and festivals will be held properly in the spring, autumn ones in the autumn, and so forth. One purpose of the many surviving sacred calendars inscribed on stone was no doubt to assure that sacrifices and festivals were held on the proper days. For the Athenians' tendency to muddle these matters, see Ar. *Nub.* 615–19.

[99] This may refer to the 'vacation' or 'relaxation' aspects of the festivals.

[100] On this see also Obbink, 1984: 616–18.

prayer, Socrates' main activity was 'watching' the events, and Polemarchus enthusiastically describes the forthcoming *pannychis* of the festival which also was 'worth seeing' (1.328a7–9).[101] Socrates and his friends were 'spectators' at a festival of a cult in which they were not members, and in general that someone was called a spectator may suggest he was not fully participating in the cult. So, too, the older men in Plato's Cretan city do not dance in the festivals, but 'behave properly in watching the young men dance, taking pleasure in their play and festival-making (*παιδιᾷ τε καὶ ἑορτάσει*)' (*Lg.* 2.657d1–4). Such is the case especially for those visiting another city's festivals. Those who visited the Cretan city to see one of its festivals were *θεωροί* ('spectators'), not full participants (*Lg.* 12.953a2–3), and in the Greek tradition an embassy sent to another city for such a purpose, like that of the Athenians to Delos at the time of Socrates' execution, was a *θεωρία* (Pl. *Phd.* 58a10–b7).[102] Aristotle claimed that 'we go abroad to Olympia for the spectacle (*θεᾶς*) itself even if there should be no other gain from it. The "watching" (*θεωρία*) itself is better than much money.'[103] Heraclides of Pontus, a student of Plato and Aristotle, reported that Pythagoras said of the Greek international athletic festivals that in them trained athletes sought the glory and fame of the crown of victory. Others came to make profits by buying and selling. But there was also a group, those especially noble, who were seeking not applause or profit but came 'to see' (*visendi causa*) and diligently watched what was being done and in what way it was done.[104] In festivals merely 'watching' seems the role

[101] Aristotle (*Pol.* 6.1323a1–3) treats athletic and Dionysiac contests, both parts of festivals and involving many 'spectators', as *θεωρίαι*. Cf. 8.1342a18–28 and *Protr.* frag. 12 [Ross] = Iambl. *Protr.* 9. Compare the *φιλοθεάμονες* of dramatic productions in the various Attic Dionysia (Pl. *Rep.* 5.475d1–8). On this aspect of festivals, see Mikalson, 1982: 216–17. The *φιλοθεάμονες* are also *φιλήκοοι*, and both the 'hearing' and 'seeing' are prominent in *Lg.* 12.953a3–b1.

[102] On the nature of such *theoriai* in general, see Dillon, 1997. I avoid the common and misleading misnomer 'pilgrimages' for such Greek *θεωρίαι*, for the reasons outlined by Scullion, 2005. On the importance of 'seeing' in *θεωρίαι*, and on Plato's use of the model of festival *θεωρίαι* to formulate and describe philosophical *θεωρία*, i.e. the 'contemplation' of 'theoretical' philosophy, see Nightingale, 2005.

[103] *Protr.* frag. 12 [Ross] = Iambl. *Protr.* 9.

[104] Frag. 88 [Wehrli] = Cicero, *Tusc.* 5.3.9. Cf. D.L. 8.8 and Iambl., *VP* 58. For the claim that Heraclides here is retrojecting fourth-century views onto Pythagoras, see Nightingale, 2005: 153 n. 4.

of non-members of the cult. Other participants were, presumably, thought to be more fully engaged in the activities.

For the twelve festivals of the eponymous heroes of his twelve tribes Plato has, in addition to sacrifices, choruses, and contests involving events of the Muses and athletics (*χορούς τε καὶ ἀγῶνας μουσικούς, τοὺς δὲ γυμνικούς*), all distributed in a way befitting the gods themselves and each of the seasons (*Lg.* 8.828c2–5). In the Cretan city athletic contests are 'fine play' (*παιδιὰς καλάς*), but are exclusively military in nature, 'festival battles' (*μάχαι τινὲς ἑορταστικαί*), imitating real military battles as closely as possible (8.829b7–c1). All the familiar footraces of Greek athletics are to be run there in armour, and there are to be in addition a race of 60 stades (7.5 miles) over smooth ground in hoplite armour to a sanctuary of Ares and back, and one in archer equipment, of 100 stades (12.5 miles), over mountainous terrain, to a sanctuary of the archer gods Apollo and Artemis (8.832e7–833c2).[105] So, too, the young, male and female, before they are of fighting age, are to be equipped at festivals with weapons and horses when they make approaches and processions (*προσόδους τε καὶ πομπάς*) for all the gods (7.796c4–7). One of few reasons allowed to the citizens of Magnesia to go abroad was to compete in the pan-Hellenic festivals.[106] Plato here just touches on the religious purpose and directs attention rather to public relations and education (12.950e2–951a4):

> It is necessary to send to Apollo at Pytho and to Zeus at Olympia and to Nemea and the Isthmus the most, the most handsome, and the best men one can, to share in the sacrifices and contests for these gods. They will make our city appear glorious in the sacrifices and the peaceful assemblies, creating a good (peacetime) reputation as a counterpart to that involving war.[107] When they have returned home, they will teach the young that the political laws of the other cities are inferior to their own.[108]

[105] On these races in the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 381–2.

[106] In *Rep.* 5.470e8–9 Socrates also foresees participation in international festivals by the citizens of his state.

[107] Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 3.7.1.

[108] International reputation and the laws are also linked in *Lg.* 5.729d4–e1, where the lawgiver claims that 'for his city and fellow citizens that man is best who would choose, in preference to victories at Olympia or in warlike or peaceful contests, a victory for fame (*δόξα*) in service to the laws at home, that he best of all men served the laws in his life'.

For the local athletic contests there are to be prizes for victory and excellence, and at these festivals there are also to be both encomia and criticisms for individuals for their performance in the contests and for the life they lead. The purpose is to 'adorn' the individual who seems to be best and to criticize the one who does not (8.829b7–c5). In the *Republic*, too, Plato at sacrifices will honour 'good men' with seats, meat, and full cups of wine—all very Homeric-type honours (e.g. *Il.* 8.161–2 and 12.310–12). The purpose there is to both 'honour and train' (ἅμα τῷ τιμᾶν ἀσκῶμεν) the good men and women (*Rep.* 5.468d6–e3). Using festivals as occasions to praise winners of contests and benefactors of the state was widespread in antiquity.[109] The thought that, conversely, evil people should be publicly criticized in festivals might naturally occur, but it is counter to the atmosphere of most festivals and is unique to the *Laws*. One might think, though, of the lampooning of prominent citizens and politicians in the old comedies of the Dionysiac dramatic festivals in Athens, but Plato's lawgiver expressly forbids such mocking of citizens in the festivals of the *Laws* (11.935b4–936a2).

For the ἀγῶνες μουσικοί the gods, as we have seen, gave men the Muses and Apollo Musegetes as 'fellow-festival-celebrators':[110] 'These gave to men the pleasurable perception of rhythm and harmony,[111] and by this they make us move and lead us in dance, linking us to one another in songs and dances. They have named "choruses" (χορούς) from the "delight" (χαρά) that is inherent in them' (*Lg.* 2.653a5–654a5).[112] The songs of the choruses, too, each suited to their festivals, provided to the city a 'good-fortuned pleasure' (ἡδονὴν εὐτυχῆ) (7.812e10–813a3). Plato divides dances in festivals into those of war and those of peace. The former are 'armed games', like those of the Curetes on Crete or of the Dioscuri in Sparta. The Athenian lawgiver gives the origin of similar 'war dances' of Athena in Athens (*Lg.* 7.796b3–c4):

[109] For many examples at the City Dionysia and other dramatic festivals in Athens, see Mette, 1977.

[110] On Dionysus, see below. For both μουσική and γυμναστική as a gift of 'some god', see *Rep.* 3.411e4–6.

[111] Cf. *Lg.* 2.672c8–d4.

[112] On the role and nature of music and dance and their educational purposes in the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 302–18 and Reverdin, 1945: 69–88.

Our maiden and mistress was delighted (ἐυφρανθεῖσα) by the play of dance (τῇ τῆς χορείας παιδιᾷ), but she did not think she ought to be out of doors with empty hands but rather adorned with a full set of armour. So should she perform the dance. It would be fitting for boys and girls to imitate this, thereby honouring the *charis* of the goddess both in training for war and for festivals.

Here, as in the athletic/military contests, the purpose is twofold, honouring the deity and preparing for war. In dances of an unwarlike type, one, again, first 'honours the gods and the children of the gods', that is, the heroes. One large class of these dances would occur in the expectation of success (ἐν δόξῃ τοῦ πράττειν εὖ). But this class can be subdivided into two: dances of those who have escaped from labours and dangers into good things—which has greater pleasures—and dances after one's previous goods have been saved and increased—which has more mild pleasures than the other (7.815d4–e4). Here, again, as with all elements of the festival, we see the honouring of the gods combined with human pleasures.

Dionysus was the third of the 'fellow-festival-celebrators' the gods gave to men, but he was a special, problematical case as was his wine.[113] In the *Laws* the Spartan lawgiver speaks proudly of his country's law preventing all drunkenness. A Spartan, he claims, would not accept the excuse of the Dionysia from a drunken reveller—which he had seen happen in Athens—and he was appalled to see the whole city of Tarentum, a Spartan colony, drunk at the festival of Dionysus (1.637a2–b6). The Athenian lawgiver, however, finds uses for wine and even drunkenness. He very carefully regulates the use of wine, but he gives it two functions, one utilizing the 'bad' effects of wine, the other its 'good' effects.

Children under the age of 18 must not drink at all. From 18 to 30 they may drink some, but not to drunkenness. From then on, in the feasts of their common messes, citizens may on certain occasions drink to drunkenness. The behaviour of these drunk citizens is carefully observed. Plato's lawgiver describes the syndrome of drinking wine: the drinker first becomes more kindly (ἵλεως), and, the more he drinks, the more he is filled, in his mind, with 'good hopes' and 'power'. Drinking still more, he feels a sense of licence of speech

[113] On Dionysus and wine in the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 441–3.

as if he were wise, with a feeling of freedom (ἐλευθερία) and with complete fearlessness so that he unhesitatingly says and does anything. Wine intensifies pleasures, pains, passions, and erotic desires, and drunkenness removes perceptions, memories, beliefs, and rational thoughts. The drunk's soul becomes childlike, loses self-control, and becomes very wicked. When completely drunk, he suffers from 'fearlessness and an excess of boldness at the wrong times and in an inappropriate manner'. He does not listen to his neighbours and thinks himself capable of ruling both himself and them.[114] It is the adult citizen's reaction to all these bad effects of drunkenness that Plato's sober elders and government officials study in evaluating the man. Drunkenness provides for Plato's city a test of character unsurpassed in 'cheapness, safety, and speed' (1.650b3–4), and the individual failing the test can be identified and subjected to adult re-education (2.671a4–672d10).

The 'good' effects of wine also have their purpose. The gods of the *Laws* gave the Muses, Apollo Musegetes, and Dionysus to humans also as 'fellow dancers and chorus-leaders' (συγχορευτάς τε καὶ χορηγούς) (2.665a3–6). Plato's lawgiver develops this so as to have the Muses as patrons of the chorus of children, Apollo patron of the chorus of those up to 30, and, to the surprise of his companions, Dionysus the patron of a chorus of elders, those from 50 to 60 years old.[115] 'For him they will dance' (2.665b4–6). Dionysus' role here, as wine, is to induce this senior chorus, despite their inhibitions, to sing songs—perhaps in private settings[116]—that are necessary for the education of the young. 'As they sing, they themselves enjoy immediate, harmless pleasures and also become for the younger people guides of the proper enjoyment of good habits' (2.670d6–e2). Wine rejuvenates these elderly men and, because they forget their ill-temper, makes their souls softer and more pliable, like iron put into fire. These older men by experience and knowledge are expert in the proper rhythms and harmonies of songs, and, when relaxed by wine, can produce songs necessary for the edification of

[114] *Lg.* 1.645d6–646a2, 649a4–b5, and 2.671b3–6.

[115] On these choruses and their ages, see England, 1921, on 7.812b9; Morrow, 1960: 313–18; and Reverdin, 1945: 74–6.

[116] On this see England, 1921, on 2.666c8.

the young—songs that were perhaps to serve as models for the junior choruses.[117] Plato has thus maintained a role for Dionysus in the songs of festival choruses, and at the highest level, but it seems secondary and forced. Dionysus and his wine offer only the release of inhibition that allows his elderly singers to perform what they have learned not through the inspiration of Dionysus but through study and experience.

If, however, drunkenness cannot be regulated and controlled for the serious purpose of instilling 'sound thinking' (*σωφροσύνη*), if it is treated as pure 'play' and anyone who wishes can drink when he wishes, with whom he wishes, and in whatever activities he wishes, then the lawgiver would not vote that his city and citizens should ever practise drunkenness. Rather, he would impose the following severe restrictions (2.673e3–674c4):

> I would accept the Carthaginian law that no one on a military expedition ever taste wine . . . and I would add that no slave, male or female, taste wine, or rulers in their year of service, or pilots of boats or jurors when they are at work, or anyone who participates in a deliberative council of any importance; that no one drink at all during the day except for athletic training or treatment of disease, nor at night when he is attempting to beget children. Someone could tell also of many other situations in which those who are sensible and obey the correct law must not drink wine. According to this argument, there would not be a need of many vineyards for my city . . . and of all agricultural production that concerning wine would be most measured and modest.

Even in this worst case, however, Plato's severe lawgiver has not completely eliminated wine from his city. Perhaps he leaves enough for the festivals of Dionysus because later, in Book 6, he allows that 'drinking to drunkenness is neither proper nor safe anywhere else than in the festivals of the god who gave wine' (6.775b4–6). As so often, Plato is unwilling to challenge an established religious tradition.

Plato's Spartan Megillus and his Athenian lawgiver both associate drunkenness with the Dionysia, one criticizing it and the other, perhaps reluctantly, allowing it. Both seem to have in mind the rural festivals of Dionysus, and it is to festivals of such a type that Heraclitus, a century and a half earlier, seems to be referring when he

[117] *Lg.* 2.664c4–666d1, 7.812b9–c1.

claimed (*VS* 22 B 15), 'If they were not making the procession and singing a song to genitals (*phalloi*) for Dionysus, they would be doing the most shameless things.'[118] His comment is usually taken as criticism of all such Dionysiac activities but is more likely a recognition that they were appropriate in a religious context but not in a secular one.[119]

Distinct from such rural Dionysia is the City Dionysia of Athens with its contests of dithyrambs, tragedies, and comedies. In our discussion of 'good speech' (εὐφημία) and sacrifices we have seen Plato's attacks on these choral and dramatic elements. There the criticisms were for violating the 'good speech' that should attend sacrifices and for being bad moral influences on members of the audience.[120] The Athenian lawgiver also severely criticizes, on educational grounds, the current method of judging contests typical of the City Dionysia. Such contests, he claims, are to be judged by the 'pleasure' they provide, but only the wise are capable of recognizing the appropriate 'pleasure' (*Lg.* 2.658e6–659c5):[121]

I am in agreement to this extent with the many, that song and choral dance (μουσική) must be judged on the basis of pleasure, not, however, on the basis of the pleasure of chance individuals. That Muse is best which delights the people who are best and who are sufficiently educated, one who excels in virtue (ἀρετή) and education. We say the judges of these things need virtue because they must possess both reason (φρονήσεως) and courage (ἀνδρείας). The true judge must judge not by learning from the audience, losing his wits because of the din of the many and his own lack of education. Nor must he, when he knows what is right, from unmanliness and cowardice casually give a false decision from the same mouth with which he invoked the gods when he was going to judge.[122] The judge sits not as a student but as a teacher of the audience, as is just, and he is to oppose those who give pleasure to the

[118] The festival Heraclitus describes is apparently a Lenaia (ληναϊζουσιν) but is most certainly not the Athenian dramatic festival of the same name.

[119] Steiner, 2001: 121 and Osborne, 1997: 38–40. See also Adoménas, 1999: 92–4.

[120] One idiosyncratic element of Platonic εὐφημία was not to tell false stories about the gods (pp. 145–6). In the *Euthyphro* Plato offers a visual counterpart to that in the context of the Panathenaia. He has Socrates question the truthfulness of the representations of the battles of the gods embroidered on Athena's *peplos* and exhibited in the procession to the Acropolis (6b7–c4).

[121] Cf. *Lg.* 2.657d8–e6.

[122] In the City Dionysia in Athens the judges swore to give an impartial verdict. See Pickard-Cambridge, 1968: 97.

audience in ways not fitting or correct. We could use that old Greek custom and not judge as is the current Sicilian and Italian custom, which entrusts the decision to the majority of the audience and decides the winner by a show of hands. That has corrupted the poets themselves, for they write according to the lowly pleasures of their judges, with the result that the audience educates the poets. It has also corrupted the pleasures of the spectators. They ought always to get a pleasure that is better by hearing of characters better than themselves, but now the opposite happens by their own doing.[123]

Plato's criticisms probably concern the City Dionysia at Athens. Athenians did not follow the Sicilian and Italian model but did select judges of the contests of the festival by lot,[124] a process that would not assure the wisest and bravest judges.

Aristotle in the *Politics* took the festival audience as it was and similarly accepted the criterion of 'pleasure', but he accepted what Plato refused, that is, to let the festival audience determine the nature of the music in the competitions (8.1342a18–28):

The audience is of two types, the one free and educated, the other common people from the artisans, hired workers, and other such. One must allow contests and spectacles also for this second type for their recreation (*ἀνάπαυσις*). Just as their souls are perverted from the true natural state, so also (in their music) there are perversions of the harmonies and some of their songs are high pitched and ill coloured. But what is kindred to one's nature creates pleasure, and therefore one must allow the competitors to use some such type of music for such an audience.[125]

Aristotle would not, however, allow young men to watch comedies until education has innoculated them against the harm from them (7.1336b20–3).

[123] Plato offers what seems to be his view of what, in contemporary society, pleases whom: 'If the small children judge, they will select the one showing magic tricks.' 'If the older children choose, they will pick the one showing comedies. Educated women, young men, and, generally speaking, most people perhaps will choose the one showing tragedies.' 'We the old men, after listening with most pleasure to the rhapsode presenting well the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, or one of Hesiod's works, perhaps would say he very much wins' (*Lg.* 2.658c10–d8). Diogenes (frag. V B 487 [G] = D.L. 6.24) reduced all the Dionysiac contests to *μεγάλα θαύματα* for fools.

[124] See Pickard-Cambridge, 1968: 95–7.

[125] For Aristotle's general trust in the 'many' to make good judgements concerning *τὰ τῆς μουσικῆς ἔργα καὶ τὰ τῶν ποιητῶν*, see *Pol.* 3.1281a40–b10.

The Athenian state financed some of its contests, especially choral and dramatic productions and torch races, through contributions (liturgies) imposed on the wealthier citizens. *Choregia* was the financing of a dithyrambic, tragic, or comic chorus, or a *lampadarchia* (a torch race team). Despite his willingness to spend large amounts of state funds for religious purposes, and despite his claim in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (4.1122b19–23) that performing a *choregia* in a 'magnificent way' (λαμπρῶς) was an expenditure bringing honour in the community, in the *Politics* (5.1309a14–20) Aristotle claimed that in a democracy one must spare the wealthy large expenses in this area. It was better, he wrote, to prevent the rich from making such expensive and useless liturgies as *choregiai* and *lampadarchiai*, even if they wanted to make them.[126] We have in this simple proposal by Aristotle the clearest example of the intersection of philosophical thought and contemporary political debate and action concerning religious practices.[127] The Athenian statesman Lycurgus, who was politically dominant in the state from 336/5 to 324, had complained that such *choregiai* were only for the glory of the family of the *choregos*, a conspicuous display of wealth that could better be used for building walls and ships (*Against Leocrates* 139–140). Under the reign of Demetrius of Phaleron (317–307/6) such *choregiai* were abolished in Athens, reflecting Demetrius' own view of *choregiai* and choregic victory monuments: 'For victors the tripod is not a dedication of victory but a last libation over the exhausted resources and a cenotaph of failed families' (*FGrHist* 228 F 25). The clear linkage here between Aristotelian theory and contemporary political policy is to be explained in good part by the fact that the two politicians were themselves either supporting (Lycurgus) or participating (Demetrius) members of Athens' philosophical community.

As with prayer and sacrifice, the institution of festivals is not, in itself, criticized or condemned by the philosophers. Their dual purpose, to honour the gods and to provide pleasure and relaxation, is uniformly valued. Even Epicurus advised celebrating festivals (Philodemus, *On Piety* 1787–91 [O]), himself celebrated all the ancestral festivals (790–810), and found in them a characteristically Epicurean

[126] Cf. *Pol.* 6.1320b2–4.
[127] Mikalson, 1998: 54–6.

manner of honouring the gods: 'In festivals one progresses to an understanding (ἐπίνοιαν) of the nature (of the divine) because everyone is speaking of him' (765–70). In discussing festivals Plato's attention quickly moves from the religious purposes to their educational potential,[128] and he finds much to reform in the nature, pleasure, and administration of the musical and athletic contests they feature, but he accepts and develops festivals as a major religious institution for the citizens of his new city on Crete.

DEDICATIONS

We Athenians have adorned the sanctuaries of the gods like no others have.
(Socrates in [Plato] *Alcibiades* 2.148e6–7)

In Plato's *Laws* dedications are associated with sacrifices, prayers, and other cult 'service' to the gods as things that are 'the finest, best, and most useful for the *eudaimon* life' (4.716d6–e1). In the *Republic* Glaucon claims the wealthy (but unjust) man can 'serve the gods' much better than the just man, in part by erecting dedications in a magnanimous way (μεγαλοπρεπῶς) (2.362c1–6). To Aristotle, 'the magnanimous person' (ὁ μεγαλοπρεπής) does not spend money on himself but on 'the public good' (εἰς τὰ κοινά), and these gifts are in some way similar to dedications (*EN* 4.1123a4–5). Money spent on dedications brings honour to the dedicator, like money spent on sacrifices and the building of temples (4.1122b19–20).[129] Aristotle recommends that oligarchs, on entering office, adorn the city with dedications and buildings to win the favour of the populace. These will also serve as 'memorials of their expenditures' (*Pol.* 6.1321a35–40). Tyrants, too, find political advantage in dedications. Like the Cypselids of Corinth, by constructing them they can keep their subjects too poor and

[128] The author of the Pseudo-Platonic *Hipparchus* has Pisistratus' son Hipparchus introducing recitations of Homeric epics into the Athenian Panathenaia for the moral education of the citizens (228b4–c6).

[129] Cf. *EN* 4.1321a40–2. For the elevated status coming with the making of large dedications, see Pl. *Gorg.* 472a5–b1.

too busy to revolt (*Pol.* 5.1313b19–25).[130] Dedications are thus 'gifts' to the gods that bring public recognition to the dedicators, adorn the city and its sanctuaries, and become part of the 'public good'.[131]

Statues of gods are a distinct type of dedication,[132] one product of 'recognizing the gods' (Pl. *Prt.* 322a3–5), and, according to Plato's lawgiver, they, along with oracles, altars, and temples, were founded and consecrated as a result of divination, revelation, or divine inspiration and must not be disturbed (*Lg.* 5.738b5–c7). The lawgiver offers our one bit of evidence of how the gods themselves might react to such statues: 'We erect images of the gods as statues (*ἀγάλματα*), and we honour (*ἀγάλλειν*) these even though they have no souls,[133] but we believe that because of this those gods who do have souls have goodwill (*εὔνοια*) and *charis*' (*Lg.* 11.931a1–4).[134]

The earliest criticism with regard to dedications, by Heraclitus of Ephesus, focused on such statues of gods. He mocks those 'who pray to these statues, as if someone were holding a conversation with a house, not knowing at all who the gods and heroes are' (frag. *VS* 22 B 5).[135] Various interpretations of this typically cryptic Heraclitean fragment have been put forth, ranging from a simple assault on those who pray to statues to a sophisticated comment on the dangers 'of transferring human expectations into the divine context in which

[130] For other examples of this, see Keyt, 1999: 173.

[131] Dedications as gifts: [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.149c2–3 and 149e6–150a1; Pl. *Lg.* 4.716e3–717a1 and 12.956b1–2. As adornment: [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.148e6–7; Arist. *Pol.* 6.1321a37–8; Zeno, *SVF* 1.266.

[132] For the superiority 'in body' of statues of gods to those of men, see Arist. *Pol.* 1.1254b33–6.

[133] Much hangs here on the meanings given to *ἄγαλμα* and *ἀγάλλειν*. *ἄγαλμα* is in this period the *vox propria* for a statue of a god, and that, rather than 'an object of worship', is probably its meaning here. See Chantraine, 1983: 6–7. *ἀγάλλειν* is used by Aristophanes (*Th.* 128 and *Pax* 399), with an accusative as here, to mean 'honouring' a god. It seems, in the Plato passage, etymologically appropriate to *ἀγάλλειν* an *ἄγαλμα*, but to *τιμᾶν* (the usual word for 'honouring' a god) an *ἄγαλμα* would seem odd. In *Phdr.* 251a4–7 and 252d6–e1 Socrates compares the beloved (*τὰ παιδικά*) simultaneously to an *ἄγαλμα* and a *θεός*, and in this context the idea of honouring, 'celebrating the rites of', and 'sacrificing' seemingly spills over from the god to the *ἄγαλμα*.

[134] On *charis* in general in relation to dedications, see Parker, 1998: 110–12 and Yunis, 1988*a*: 102–6.

[135] For the whole text being Heraclitean, see Osborne, 1997: 41 n. 6.

a different kind of behaviour makes sense'.[136] The key to the interpretation may be that for Heraclitus the one who prays to statues does not know 'who the gods and heroes are'.[137] Plato's lawgiver distinguishes between statues of gods, which have no souls, and real gods, which do. One can perhaps honour (*ἀγάλλειν*) a 'soulless' statue as in the *Laws*, but one could hardly 'pray' to such a one and expect to be heard. Heraclitus, perhaps, thinks that those who pray to inanimate statues mistake them for their real counterparts, who have souls, or, in his terms, consciousness and intelligence. Or, as Democritus put it, 'statues, outstanding by their clothing and jewellery for viewing, lack "heart" (*καρδίης*)' (*VS* 68 B 195). Epicurus claimed that it was characteristic of a wise man to dedicate statues (*εἰκόνας*) (D.L. 10.120), but the claim that he himself 'worshipped' ([*σέ*] *β*[*ε*]*σθαι*) statues of the gods (*ἀγαλμάτων*) is based on an unlikely and ungrammatical restoration of the text of Philodemus, *On Piety* 910–12 [O]. Antisthenes, a student of Socrates, took another tack in his criticism of statues of the gods: 'God resembles no one (or "nothing"): this is precisely why nobody can grasp him through an image' (frag. VA 181 [G]).[138]

Of particular interest to Plato as a topic of conversation were, not surprisingly, the sayings 'Know Yourself' and 'Nothing to Excess' inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi.[139] He has Protagoras describe these as dedications made to Apollo by the Seven Sages as first-fruits of their wisdom (*ἀπαρχὴν τῆς σοφίας*) (*Prt.* 343a8–b3).[140] Critias in the *Charmides* views the inscription 'Know Yourself' as an address of the god to those entering the temple, as was, he claims, the intention of the (here) single dedicator. For him other dedicators dedicated the other inscribed maxims as pieces of advice, not as the salutation of Apollo (164d3–165a7). Only the lawgiver in *Laws* 11.923a3–5 explicitly assigns the maxim 'Know Yourself' to the

[136] Ibid. 36–7. See also Steiner, 2001: 79, 121–2 and Adoménas, 1999: 101–7. Kahn (1979: 266–7) sees it as an attack on 'the general practice of Greek religion as centred on temples and cult statues'.

[137] See Pulleyn, 1997: 210 and Meijer, 1981: 223 and 234.

[138] On Antisthenes see Kahn, 1996: 4–9 and Goulet-Cazé, 1996: 68–9.

[139] Pl. *Prt.* 343a8–b3, *Chrm.* 164d3–165a7, *Phlb.* 48c7–d2 and [Pl.] *Alc.* 1.124a8–b1, 129a2–4, and 132c9–d2. Cf. Aristotle, *On Philosophy*, frag. 3 [Ross].

[140] On the list of Seven Sages here and on Plato's use of *ἀπαρχή*, see Manuwald, 1999: 335–8.

Pythia. Aristotle opens his *Eudemian Ethics* with a rejection of a couplet inscribed on the gateway of the sanctuary of Leto on Delos:

> Justice is most beautiful, health is best,
> but most pleasing of all is to obtain what one desires.[141]

For Aristotle the dedicator was giving only his own opinion, an opinion that Aristotle counters by claiming that '*eudaimonia* is the most beautiful, best, *and* most pleasing of all things' (1.1214a1–8).[142]

As gifts that can influence the gods, dedications are subject, for Plato, to the same criticisms as sacrifices and prayers. Defenders of the 'unjust life' claim that the gods are able to be persuaded to excuse injustices by dedications as well as by sacrifices and prayers (*Rep.* 2.365e2–5), and, of course, Plato has Socrates reject any such notion. Socrates in *Alcibiades* 2 does not think that the gods are such as 'to be misled by gifts like an evil moneylender'. 'It would be terrible', he claims, 'if the gods look to our gifts and sacrifices, but not to the soul, to see if a man is "religiously correct" and just' (149e2–150a1).

The Stoic Zeno rejected entirely the use of dedications: 'Zeno said it was necessary to adorn the cities not with dedications (ἀναθήμασι) but with the virtues (ἀρεταῖς) of the inhabitants.' One reason for this, according to Clement of Alexandria, was that Zeno thought no human construction was 'worthy of the gods'.[143] Dedications were, however, to be common in Plato's new Cretan city, and his lawgiver, in setting the regulations for them, gives welcome information on contemporary practices (*Lg.* 12.955e5–956b3):

> The moderate man ought to erect and give as a gift to the gods dedications that are moderate. The earth and the hearth of the household are, in the eyes of all, 'sacred property' of all the gods, and therefore let no one consecrate (καθιερούτω) them a second time as 'sacred' (ἱερά). In other cities gold and silver both in private and in sanctuaries are a possession that causes envy, (and hence are not suitable for dedication in our city). Ivory, since the body has lost its soul, is not a pollution-free (ἐναγές) dedication. Iron and bronze

[141] On this couplet and the unusual opening for an Aristotelian work, see Dirlmeier, 1984: 144–5.

[142] On this passage in the larger context of Aristotle's view of *eudaimonia*, see Woods, 1982: 47–50.

[143] *SVF* 1.266 = Stob., *Flor.* 4.1.88 and 264 = Clem. Al., *Strom.* 5.11.76.

are the tools of war. Let someone dedicate whatever he wishes of solid wood, and so too of stone, for the public sanctuaries, and likewise a weaving so long as it is not more than a month's work of one woman. The colour white would befit gods both in weavings and elsewhere. They are not to apply dyes except on ornaments of war. The most divine gifts are birds and figures of gods that one painter may complete in one day. And let the other dedications imitate these in such ways.[144]

The dedicatory practices that Plato's lawgiver here eliminates or restricts were widespread in the Greek world. Land was given to deities, either to establish or to enlarge a sanctuary, and Plato's complaint here is not that such land should not be 'dedicated' to a god but that it should not be 'consecrated', that is, 'made sacred' because all land, as property of the gods, is already sacred. He denies the fundamental Greek distinction between 'profane' and 'sacred' land.[145] The Cynic Bion of Borysthenes (*c.*335–245) bases his attack on the concept of *hierosylia*, 'the stealing of sacred things', on a similar premise: 'There is no such thing as *hierosylia*, since anything stolen is only removed from one place belonging to the gods to another place belonging to the gods' (frag. 33 [K] = Sen. *Ben.* 7.7.2). Gold and silver, the most costly dedications in sanctuaries, are rejected because of the bad human feelings they generate, and this restriction is compatible with the lawgiver's rejection of the use of gold and silver by individuals throughout the new city.[146] Plato eliminates ivory, also a common Greek dedication, by creatively invoking pollution: something dead would pollute the sanctuary. Iron and bronze are eliminated because they are tools of war. This recalls the opposition to the dedications of weapons in sanctuaries that Plato had Socrates earlier express in the *Republic* (5.469e7–470a3):

[144] On this passage see Reverdin, 1945: 66–7. On its wide use in the later philosophical tradition, including a translation by Cicero (*Leg.* 2.18.45), see England, 1921, *ad loc.* Noteworthy is the contrast between the restrictions on dedications here and those dedications of gold statues Plato imagines in the sanctuary of Poseidon on Atlantis (*Criti.* 116d7–e8). Phaedrus seems unusually inclined to promise statues as dedications, gold life-sized ones of himself and Socrates for Delphi and another one of Socrates for Olympia (*Phdr.* 235d8–e1 and 236b2–4).

[145] On this see Horster, 2004: 39–42.

[146] *Lg.* 5.741e7–742a2 and 801b5–7.

We will not bring weapons to sanctuaries in order to dedicate them, especially weapons of Greeks if we have any concern with the goodwill (εὐνοίας) towards other Greeks.[147] And even more will we fear that it may be a pollution (μίασμα) to bring to a sanctuary such weapons from our kin (οἰκείων), unless the god says something else.

Here dedications of weapons of other Greeks cause ill will, but those of one's own citizens after a civil war cause pollution because they result from the killing of one's own 'kin'.[148] And, finally, the god may object, to judge by an incident in the Persian Wars as reported by Pausanias (10.14.5–6):

It is said that Themistocles arrived at Delphi bringing some Persian spoils for Apollo. He asked if he should place the dedications inside the temple, but the Pythia ordered him to take them entirely out of the sanctuary. So this part of the oracle goes:

> Do not deposit the very beautiful Persian spoils in my temple.
> Send them back home as quickly as possible.

I was surprised that the Pythia thought it unworthy to accept Persian spoils from only Themistocles. Some believed that Apollo would similarly have rejected all spoils from the Persian if others, like Themistocles, had asked him before they made their dedications.[149]

After eliminating gold, silver, iron, and bronze, Plato's lawgiver is left with weavings and objects of wood and stone—all regularly dedicated by Greeks—but to limit these he applies sumptuary laws more commonly directed to burial rites and monuments of the dead. The lawgiver's preference for birds, or figures of birds,[150] remains a mystery.

Aristotle would not restrict the material and type of dedications, but as a complement to efforts to keep obscene and foul language from reaching children's ears, he would also not allow statues or

[147] Plato may be taking up a Spartan custom here, though with a different intent. Plutarch reports that Cleomenes, when asked why the Spartiates do not dedicate to the gods spoils from the enemy, replied, 'because they are from cowards' (*Mor.* 224b).

[148] In the *Laws*, by contrast, Plato's lawgiver makes the killing of a citizen, foreigner, or brother in a civil war free from pollution (9.869c6–d3).

[149] For this incident and other possible explanations of Apollo's refusal, see Mikalson, 2003: 102–3.

[150] Birds or pictures of birds? See England, 1921, on *Lg.* 12.955b1.

paintings that represented similar obscene or unseemly actions, 'except for some gods who are of the type to which the law allows "scoffing and jesting" (τωθασμός)' (*Pol.* 7.1336b12–17).[151] Such censorship would not, of course, limit the statues that Aristotle himself had dedicated through his will, one of his mother to Demeter at Nemea and those of Zeus Soter and Athena Soteira in his home city Stagira (D.L. 5.16).[152]

We save for last the witty and devastating comment on votive dedications made by the Cynic Diogenes when he was being shown the many dedications in the sanctuary of the sailor-protecting Great Gods of Samothrace: 'There would be many more if also those who were not saved were setting up dedications' (frag. V B 342 [G] = D.L. 6.59).[153] Only Antisthenes and Diogenes and the Stoic Zeno challenged conventional Greek practices of dedication on religious terms. Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus, as we have seen, accepted the practice, and both Plato and Aristotle modified only the implementation of the practice in ways that furthered their social purposes.

PRIESTS

Priests, as tradition says, are knowledgeable in giving gifts through sacrifices from us to the gods in the way they want it (κατὰ νοῦν ἐκείνοις) and in asking for us through prayers the acquisition of good things from them. These are both parts of a service craft (διακόνου τέχνης).

So the stranger in Plato's *Politicus* (290c8–d3) captures the essence of the Greek priesthood and its position in the hierarchy of the state as it is expressed in the philosophical tradition of this period.[154] Priests sacrifice, pray, and do both not as 'rulers' but as 'servants'. They

[151] Kraut (1997: 164) sees a reference to rites of the Thesmophoria of Demeter here. Rites of Dionysus may also be meant.

[152] On these statues, see Mikalson, 1998: 66.

[153] The same story is told of Diagoras of Melos, a late fifth-century individual famous for his 'lack of respect', by Cicero (frag. T36 [WI] = *Nat. D.* 3.36.89).

[154] On priests in the philosophical tradition, see, for Plato's *Laws*, Piérart, 1974: 314–20.

possess the 'priestly craft' but not the 'ruling craft'.[155] For Aristotle this priestly service is an 'overseer role' (ἐπιμέλεια), clearly distinct from a ruling office (πολιτικὴ ἀρχή) in the city (*Pol.* 4.1299a15–19),[156] but still one of two branches of the 'leadership group of the city' (τὸ προεστὸς τῆς πόλεως) (7.1331b4–6).

Plato's lawgiver will not disturb 'ancestral priesthoods' (πάτριαι ἱερωσύναι), presumably those handed down within one family from generation to generation. Other priests, however, are to be selected by lot, 'giving the matter over to divine fortune (θείᾳ τύχῃ), entrusting to the god that what is pleasing (κεχαρισμένον) to him happens'. The one who wins the allotment is, however, further scrutinized, to see whether he is of legitimate birth and sound (ὁλόκληρον) body; that he is, as much as possible, from a pure family; and that he himself, his father, and his mother have lived their lives free from the pollution of murder and 'from mistakes concerning such things in relationship to the gods'.[157] Each priesthood is to be for one year and no longer, and 'the man who is going to be capably performing sacred rites concerning the divine according to the sacred laws is to be not less than 60 years old. And the same provisions for the priestesses' (*Lg.* 6.759a8–d4). In Aristotle's state priests are not rulers, but they are, unlike farmers and menial labourers, citizens, 'because it is fitting that the gods be honoured by citizens'. Aristotle's priests are to be retirees from military or deliberative branches of the citizenry, men who have 'grown weary because of time' (*Pol.* 7.1329a27–34).[158]

If we exclude the occasional international festivals, Plato envisages sacrifice and prayer by individuals, by families, and by the city as a whole or by component parts of it. It is remarkable how small a role the priests and priestesses, the experts in sacrifice and prayer, play in all this. Plato does, as we have seen, restrict by law private sanctuaries and prayers and sacrifices at them, demanding that the worshippers

[155] On ἡ τῶν ἱερέων τέχνη see also Pl. *Smp.* 202e7–203a1.

[156] Cf. *Pol.* 6.1322b18–19 and 7.1328b5–15.

[157] Cf. Pl. *Ep.* 8.357a1. On priests and freedom from pollution as required here, see Parker, 1983: 205.

[158] For an attempt to explain why Aristotle would limit priesthoods to the elderly, see Kraut, 1997: 108–9. Kraut also attempts, perhaps misguidedly, to fit the role of these priests into Aristotle's personal theology, with the result that his priests 'would supervise at celebrations of the eternally recurring processes of nature and the movements of the spheres' (p. 102).

sacrifice and pray in the public domain under the supervision of priests and priestesses (*Lg.* 10.909d6–e2). For the family it is absolutely necessary to have a male heir to succeed the father as the 'servant' (θεραπεύτης or ὑπηρέτης) of the gods.[159] The gods whom he is to serve, 'according to the laws',[160] are apparently the traditional gods of Greek household cult,[161] and the family member who serves them is not termed a 'priest'.[162]

Plato, as we have seen, puts priests outside and below the political rulers, and Aristotle neatly divides 'the leadership group of the city' into priests and rulers, but despite these distinctions both give 'rulers' a major role, one apparently far greater than that of priests, in the sacrifices of the city and its components. For Plato 'the greatest service' (ὑπηρεσία) is that to the gods, and it is awarded to the individual who wins the contest for political leadership (*Lg.* 4.715c2–4), and in his Cretan city rulers as well as priests, both apparently independently, make public sacrifices.[163] In the *Politicus* the foreigner claims that 'in many places of the Greeks someone might find that the "greatest sacrifices" are assigned to the "greatest magistracies" (ἀρχαῖς) to sacrifice', as in Athens where the most revered (σεμνότατα) and especially ancestral (πάτρια) of the old sacrifices have been given to the (archon) Basileus (290e3–8). Aristotle distinguishes those sacrifices that are 'priestly' (ἱερατικαί) and those that are not (*Pol.* 3.1285b9–10). The latter are those that 'the law does not give to the priests but to those who have their "office" from the common hearth' (6.1322b26–9).[164] For Aristotle the practice of having political officials make public sacrifices derives from the role of kings who, in early times, had authority 'over military matters, legal matters, and sacrifices' (3.1285b9–17).[165] After kings

[159] Pl. *Lg.* 5.740b8–c2, 6.773e6–774e1 and 776b1–4, and 9.878a6–8.

[160] Cf. *Lg.* 6.776b1–4.

[161] On which see Mikalson, 2005: 133–6.

[162] In the one family sacrifice described by Plato (*Lg.* 7.800b8–c3), no priest is mentioned.

[163] On Athenian magistrates sacrificing without the participation of priests, see Parker, 2005*a*: 96–9.

[164] 'From the common hearth' is a difficult phrase. Parker (2005*a*: 97) without explanation takes it to mean that the officials 'derive their position from the common hearth'. Keyt (1999: 53), likewise without explanation, takes it to be referring to sacrifices 'which have the honour [of being celebrated] from the public hearth'.

[165] Cf. Pl. *Ep.* 8.356c8–d2.

were stripped of most of their powers, 'sacrificing officials' were variously named in the various states as *archontes*, *prytaneis*, or (as in Athens), retaining their old title, *basileis* ('kings') (6.1322b28–9).[166]

Plato's lawgiver will have a political authority (ἀρχή) sacrifice every day of the year 'on behalf of the city and its possessions' (*Lg.* 8.828a7–b3) and also at public festivals (7.800c7).[167] By contrast Plato has priests sacrifice only at marriages (*Rep.* 5.461a6–b1), at ceremonies directed against those who buy or sell inalienable land (*Lg.* 5.741b5–c6), and as overseers at some private sacrifices and prayers (10.909d8–e2), all quite occasional compared to the full programme of state-centred sacrifices of the political authorities. In addition to these sacrifices the priests and priestesses of Plato's Cretan city will, together with other experts such as *exegetai*, *manteis*, and the guardians of the laws, complete the lawgiver's programme of festivals (8.828b3–7) and will, with the guardians of the laws, enforce the laws on appropriate dances and songs in the festivals (7.799b4–8 and 800a3–b1). They are also to see to the housing and care of foreigners coming to the city's festivals and, if need be, to punish any who may commit crimes (12.953a2–b5). Finally, priests and guardians of the laws will consult with the family members in appointing a male heir for a household without one, because 'the city must, so far as it can, possess households as "religiously correct" and successful as possible' (9.877d4–e2).

Priests and priestesses may have had expertise in sacrifice and prayer, but it was not exclusive. As we have seen, rulers and heads of households also sacrificed and prayed and must have known the 'laws/customs' (οἱ νόμοι) about these matters. Xenophon in the *Memorabilia* has Socrates define as 'properly respectful' (εὐσεβής) the one who knows 'the customs (τὰ νόμιμα) about the gods' (4.6.2–4), and in the *Euthyphro* Plato has Socrates ask if 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης) is 'a knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) of asking from and giving to the gods' (14c5–6). Both discussions seem to concern private individuals and in neither is there so much as a mention of priests. In *Politics* 7.1328b5–15 Aristotle makes 'oversight concerning the divine' one of the six absolutely necessary activities (ἔργα) of a city, but the 'citizens'

[166] Cf. Pl. *Plt.* 290e3–8.
[167] Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 2.2.13.

of Socrates' first city in the *Republic* have no need of priests as 'they wear crowns and sing of the gods' (2.372b7). For the second city the need for sanctuaries, sacrifices, and 'the other services to the gods, *daimones*, and heroes' is recognized, but all this is to be left up to Apollo of Delphi (4.427b1–c4).

What priests did *not* do also defines their role in social and political life, and Plato explicitly distinguishes them from the *exegetai* who interpret and sometimes enforce the sacred laws from Apollo (*Lg.* 6.759c6–e1). Priests may assist in establishing the programme of religious festivals (8.828a7–b7), but matters of homicide and the resulting pollution are to be decided by the lawgivers together with *exegetai*, *manteis*, and Apollo. No priests are involved even though sacrifices, curses, and the identification of the appropriate gods are at issue (9.871c3–d2).[168] Priests also have no involvement in the rites of the dead, being expected rather to 'keep away from burials' since burials are impure (12.947d2–5). Finally, the guardians of the laws alone judged cases of 'lack of respect' and exacted the punishments (10.910c6–e4). The 'bearing' of priest may have been, as the stranger describes it in the *Politicus*, 'very full of pride' and they may have had a 'revered reputation because of the greatness of their undertakings' (290d6–8), but in Plato's Cretan city their role is limited to a few certain, specified, and not necessarily major occasions of sacrifice and prayer.

The 'auditors' of Plato's Cretan city were to scrutinize and correct the actions of all retiring magistrates and to fine them if they violated the law.[169] They were the magistrates over magistrates, with three over the age of 50 selected by rigorous elections each year to join the panel of those previously selected and to serve until the age of 75 (*Lg.* 12.945e3–946c7). If all were elected at the age of 50 and none died, both highly improbable, the maximum theoretical number of auditors would be seventy-five.[170] In a manner completely discordant with his treatment of political/religious authority and of

[168] The only suggestion in Plato that priests (and sophists!) might be involved in purifications is in the playful passage of *Cra.* 396e3–397a2.

[169] On the auditors, see *Lg.* 12.945b3–948b2, Morrow, 1960: 219–29, and Piérart, 1974: 319–23.

[170] This calculation discounts the twelve initially selected to form the first panel of auditors for the new city (12.946c2–3).

the priesthood elsewhere in his writings, Plato treats these auditors themselves as 'first-fruit offerings' to Apollo and Helios (946b7–c2) and makes them *all* priests. They were to be elected and live in the sanctuary of Apollo and Helios (946c7–d2) and alone were to be allowed to wear a crown of laurel. The one of the three elected each year with the most votes was to be for that year the 'high priest' (ἀρχιερεύς)[171] of this college of priests and was to give his name to the year. Like priests in many Greek cities, they were to have front-row seats at festivals, and members of their college were to oversee the *theoriai* that attended international sacrifices, festivals, and other sacred ceremonies (946e5–947b3). Unique here, both to Plato and the Greek tradition of the period, is the large college of priests, the establishment of one as 'high priest', the apparent lack of local responsibilities for sacrifices and prayers, and, most importantly, the bolstering of political authority by giving it a religious status as direct representative of the chief deities of the state. Plato must have drawn his model for this not from any Greek city but from the descriptions known to him of the Egyptian priesthood.[172] The religious authority he gives to these auditors, like their extremely elaborate and honorific funerals, burials, and funeral games (947b3–e6), reveals his deep concern with the authority and dignity he wished this highest court to have in the political structure of the Cretan city. His political concerns here, unusually, completely overwhelmed his respect for Greek religious traditions.

Plato in the *Republic*, as we have seen, criticizes sharply the *agyrtai* and *manteis* who claimed to be able to cure the injustices of individuals 'by sacrifices and spells' or to be able to persuade the gods to harm a just man 'by spells and curse tablets' (2.364b6–c5). *Agyrtai* are literally 'beggars' or 'vagabonds', and the term is closely associated with the begging priests of Cybele.[173] Plato does not include 'priests' (ἱερεῖς) among those making such claims or using such means,[174]

[171] On the exceptional use of this term, see Piérart, 1974: 321–2.

[172] Cf. *Plt.* 290d9–e3 and *Ti.* 24a3–5. Piérart (1974: 322–3) thinks Plato may have used as a model a still unknown priestly college of an Asia Minor Ionian Greek city.

[173] On these in contemporary Athens, see Parker, 2005*a*: 121–2.

[174] Cf. *Lg.* 10.909a8–d2. The only indication that priests' τέχνη might involve the use of spells or even magic (γοητεία) is Pl. *Smp.* 202e7–203a1, a difficult passage that throws together in a seemingly casual manner priests, *manteis*, and magicians.

and even the Cynics apparently refrained from criticizing conventional priests. We have from Antisthenes, a precursor of the Cynics, two quips, 'When priests of Cybele begged from him, he said, "I do not feed the Mother of the Gods; the gods feed her" ', and 'When he was being initiated into the Orphic Mysteries and when the priest had said that initiates share many good things in Hades, he replied, "Why then do you not die?" ' and both are directed against priests of highly unconventional cults.[175] In philosophical writings, unlike in Old Comedy,[176] priests were evidently exempt from criticism and ridicule.

OTHER RELIGIOUS OFFICIALS

In the *Laws* Plato has only four offices concerned with 'the sacred things': that of the priests and priestesses, of the *neokoroi*, of the *exegetai*, and of the treasurers (*tamiai*) of the sacred money.[177] All are termed *epimeletai*, 'overseers' (6.758d10–760a5).[178] Aristotle lists among the offices necessary for a government the *epimeletai* 'concerning the gods', and includes under that priests and those who are to see to the preservation and repair of sacred property and other things that have been assigned to the gods. This latter *epimeleia* is distinguished from the priesthood, and the number of officials who perform it vary from state to state. In small cities, apparently, the priest might handle all such duties, but larger cities have a number of such officials, among them *hieropoioi*, *naophylakes*, and treasurers of the sacred money, all distinct from the priesthood. Related to this *epimeleia* is that of political officials, variously named as we have seen, who perform public sacrifices (*Pol.* 6.1322b18–29). Large, prosperous cities might have separate *epimeletai* overseeing athletic, Dionysiac, or other festivals (6.1323a1–3). *Neokoroi*, *naophylakes*, *hieropoioi*, *tamiai*, and *exegetai* are titles of officials familiar from

[175] Frags. V A 178 [G] = D.L. 6.4 and 182 [G] = Clem. Al., *Protr.* 7.75.3.

[176] e.g. Aristophanes, *Av.* 848–903.

[177] On these officials see Piérart, 1974: 323–44.

[178] Cf. *Lg.* 12.953a6–7. The *agoranomoi* in the Cretan city are to oversee the sanctuaries in the *agora* (6.764b1–4 and 8.849a3–7).

Athens and other Greek cities, and the philosophers apparently did not feel the need to give a precise definition of their duties. In the *Laws* we learn only that the *tamiai* are to be elected from the richest class, must submit to a post-election scrutiny, and are to have authority over the sanctuaries, their agricultural produce, and their income from rents (6.759e3–760a4).[179] Plato seems to be giving to the *neokoros* ('temple sweeper') the care of buildings which Aristotle assigns to the *naophylakes* ('guards of the temple'),[180] and he eliminates the common *hieropoioi*, a lay committee overseeing sacrificial and festival performances, perhaps not wishing to encroach on the authority of the priests. Altogether Plato has a smaller and more streamlined religious bureaucracy than that common in most cities and described in Aristotle's *Politics*. It does appear, though, that in the *Laws* ultimately the religious bureaucracy, as virtually everything else, was to be under the oversight of the guardians of the laws.

Plato's lawgiver is, however, much concerned with the role and election of his *exegetai* ('interpreters'). The laws 'about divine things' are to be brought from Delphi,[181] but in the *Laws* the lawgiver establishes human *exegetai* as a separate college, but not a priestly one, to be in charge of these laws. The provisions for their election are complicated and disputed,[182] but the final choice is made by Apollo at Delphi. Each, like priests, is to be over 60 years old, and, unlike priests, each is to serve for life (6.759c6–e3). They are to be in authority and consulted on matters of pollution and religion in cases of homicide (9.865d1, 871c3–d2, 11.916c7–d1).[183] So, too, for funerals where they oversee 'the customary rites for both the chthonic and ouranic deities' (12.958d3–6; cf. 9.873d1–4). They even give advice on the purification of poisoned springs (8.845e2–9). In all these areas, as we have seen, Plato's priests do not operate. The only activities of the *exegetai* that may not involve pollution are

[179] For the treasurers of Hera and Zeus, see *Lg.* 6.774a8–b4 and d6–e3.

[180] Plato has the *neokoroi*, along with the priests, also see to the housing and any criminal acts of foreigners attending local festivals (12.953a3–7).

[181] On which see Ch. 3.

[182] On the *exegetai* and their election, see Piérart, 1974: 327–35, Morrow, 1960: 419–27, and Reverdin, 1945: 96–9.

[183] The Athenian *exegetes* whom Euthyphro's father consulted advised on a matter of homicide (*Euthphr.* 4c9–d5, 9a6). On the role of *exegetai* in Athens, see Piérart, 1974: 339–41.

their roles of giving advice on the offerings and other religious aspects of marriage ceremonies (6.774e9–775a3) and, with others, on the scheduling of festivals (8.828a7–b7). These *exegetai* apparently did not practise the mantic art themselves, but as his local representatives interpreted the laws that the Delphic Apollo, the 'ancestral *exegetes*', gave to the state through his Oracle.

Of all these religious officials there is only one surviving criticism in the philosophical tradition, from the acerbic Diogenes: 'When he saw the treasurers of the sacred money dragging off a man who had stolen a *phiale*, he said, "Look! The big thieves are taking away the little one"' (frag. V B 462 [G] = D.L. 6.45).[184]

[184] A comment which, as Robert Parker pointed out to me, concerns more the kind of people who became treasurers than the office itself.

3

Divination and Its Range of Influence

Divination is, as we have seen, in Socratic literature a return from the gods, often a featured return, for 'service' to them,[1] and what humans learn from divination affects many areas of their personal, economic, and religious life.[2] It is particularly interesting that divination is so widely respected in the rationalistic philosophic tradition, and we will investigate that respect and the reasons behind it. To begin, Cicero in the introduction to his *On Divination* (1.3.5–6) offers a convenient review of Greek philosophers' views of divination:

> Certain exquisite arguments of the philosophers as to why true divination exists have been collected. Of them, so that I may speak about the most ancient ones, Xenophanes of Colophon, who said that gods exist, alone eliminated divination completely. But all the rest, except Epicurus who spoke obscurely about the nature of the gods, approved of divination, but not in one way. For although Socrates and all the Socratics and Zeno and his followers remained in the opinion of the ancient philosophers, with the Old Academy and the Peripatetics agreeing, and although already before this Pythagoras had given great authority to this thing—he even wished himself to be an augur—and the serious author Democritus in very many passages approved of the prescience of future events, despite all that the Peripatetic Dicaearchus (fl. 320–300 BCE) eliminated completely other types of divination but left that of dreams and frenzy . . .[3] But since the Stoics defended almost all those things because Zeno scattered them about like, as it were,

[1] e.g. Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.18 and *Oec.* 5.19–6.1.

[2] On Plato's various and often contradictory statements about divination and *manteis*, and on Xenophon's conventional views, see Pfeffer, 1976: 6–42.

[3] By 'frenzy' (*furore*) here Cicero means the *divinus furor* that inspired prophets (*vates*), i.e. the Greek *μανία*. See 2.48.100.

seeds in his commentaries and Cleanthes had made them a little more fertile, Chrysippus, a man with a very keen intellect, agreed and set out his whole thought about divination in two books and, in addition, his thought about oracles and dreams in one book each.

We thus have the rough outlines: Xenophanes and Epicurus rejected divination. Socrates, the Socratics, the Old Academy, the Peripatetics, and Zeno and his Stoic followers seemingly accepted it all.[4] Only the Peripatetic Dicaearchus would limit divination to dreams and prophets' inspiration.

Pythagoras was, as Cicero notes, a special case. Philostratus in his *Life of Apollonius* (1.1) reports that Pythagoras claimed to have received his ritual and purity laws which, among other things, prohibited sacrifice, when he personally met with the gods and learned from them in what way they feel *charis* towards humans and what they hate. In the meeting Apollo confessed who he was, but Athena, the Muses, and the other gods did not. Apollo thus becomes, by default as it were, the divine spokesman in such matters. Pythagoras' followers considered whatever Pythagoras revealed to them to be law (*νόμος*) and honoured it as having come from Zeus.[5] Pythagoras' claims here, if accurately reported, are unique: that he met personally with gods—not through the usual divinatory methods—and that they gave him the laws for his idiosyncratic religious community. Pythagoras may, as Cicero claims, have given authority to divination,

[4] For Xenophanes and Epicurus rejecting divination, see also Epicurus frag. 395 [Usener]. On Xenophanes see Lesher, 1992: 141–2 and 153–4. Obbink, 1992*a*: 212 n. 65, however, argues that Xenophanes did not reject divination. For Democritus' description of prophetic visions and his approval of the inspection of entrails for prophetic purposes, see *VS* 68 B 166 = Sext. Emp., *Math.* 9.19 and 68 A 138 = Cic. *Div.* 1.57.131. Zeno reportedly consulted the Delphic Oracle (*SVF* 1.1 = D.L. 7.2) and so may have Diogenes the Cynic as a young man, with bad results (frag. V B 2 [G] = D.L. 6.20–21). Aristotle wrote the dedication for a statue of Hermias of Atarneus at Delphi (D.L. 5.6). For Zeno (who also wrote a book on divination, *SVF* 1.41 = D.L. 7.4) and Chrysippus approving of 'all divination' (*μαντική*) and recognizing it as a 'craft' (*τέχνη*) because of its results, see *SVF* 2.1191 = D.L. 7.149. For more on Chrysippus and divination, see *SVF* 2.939, 1189, 1192, 1206, 1214 and Gould, 1970: 76–7, 85–6, and 144–5. On Stoic divination in general see Algra, 2003: 173 and Pfeffer, 1976: 43–112.

[5] For Apollo of Delphi in particular being the spokesman for his father Zeus, see e.g. Aeschylus, *Eum.* 616–18.

but other Greeks actually had to employ it through its conventional methods.

Cicero was certainly correct about Socrates and the Socratics, among whom we may include Plato and Xenophon. Both have Socrates practise divination extensively and speak in favour of most of its forms, ranging well beyond his personal and famous *daimonion*.[6] We begin with three accounts from Xenophon that introduce many of the major issues.

Socrates openly used divination (μαντικῇ). It had been widely reported that Socrates said his *daimonion* gave signs to him. I think it is especially from this that they accused him of introducing new *daimonia*. But he was introducing nothing newer than the others who practise divination and use bird omens, words given or prompted by the gods (φήμαι), coincidences, and sacrifices.[7] These do not assume that the birds or the people they meet by chance know what is beneficial for those using divination, but that the gods give signs through these. And so also Socrates used to think. But most people say that they are influenced for or against (an action) by the birds or the persons met by chance, but Socrates used to speak of it as he understood it. He said that his *daimonion* gave signs.[8] He used to encourage many of his companions to do some things or not to do others as his *daimonion* indicated. Those who obeyed him benefited, those who did not regretted it. And yet who would not agree that he did not wish to appear either foolish or a quack to his companions? He would have seemed both if he appeared to be proved false when he announced the signs from a god. It is clear that he would not have spoken publicly if he did not believe he would be truthful.[9]

[6] For a collection of excellent essays and discussions by several scholars who treat (and often come to different conclusions about) the complex and interrelated issues of Socrates' practices of divination, his *daimonion*, his trial, and, in larger terms, the apparent conflict between a Socrates who makes all decisions by reason and one who accepts and uses several forms of divination (including his *daimonion*), see Smith and Woodruff, 2000. See also McPherran, 1996, esp. 133–9 and 175–246.

[7] What distinguishes φήμαι in the context of divination is that they are 'sounds', usually words spoken by a god (oracles), in a dream, or by a human (κληδόνες). Xenophon in *Ap.* 12–13 extends them to all 'sounds', such as of birds or thunder.

[8] Cf. Socrates in Xen. *Ap.* 13: 'Some name birds and words and coincidences and *manteis* as the ones who give signs, but I call it *daimonion*, and I think that by so naming it I speak both more truthfully and more "correctly in religious terms" (ὁσιώτερα) than those who attribute the power of the gods to the birds.'

[9] Cf. Xen. *Ap.* 13.

And in these matters who might trust anyone other than a god? And if he did trust in the gods, how did Socrates believe that the gods do not exist? Moreover, he was doing the following for his close friends. He was advising them to do the necessary things in whatever way they thought they might best be done, but he used to send them off to practise divination to see if they should do things whose outcome was uncertain. He said that those who are going to build houses well or cities need also divination. Carpentry, bronze-working, farming, ruling, the testing of all such works, arithmetic, home-management, and generalship—all such things he thought were things that could be learned and were obtainable by the reason of a human. But, he said, the gods reserved for themselves the most important of the elements in these and no one of them is clear to a human. For it is not clear to the one who has planted a field well who will harvest it, nor to the one who has built a house well who will live in it, nor to one skilled in generalship if it will benefit him to be a general, nor to a man engaged in the city's affairs if it will benefit him to govern the city, nor to one who has married a beautiful woman to find enjoyment if he will find distress because of her, nor to one who has taken powerful inlaws in the city if because of them he will be exiled from the city.[10]

Socrates said that those who thought that no one of such things was *daimonic* but that all things depended on human reasoning were, themselves, 'suffering from a *daimon*' (δαιμονᾶν).[11] Likewise 'suffering from a *daimon*', he said, were those who use divination in those matters which the gods have granted to humans to learn and decide: for example, if someone should ask whether it is better to take for one's team of horses a person who knows how to handle the reins or one who does not, or whether it is better to take for one's ship one who knows how to be a pilot or one who does not. Likewise he thought that those did wrong (ἀθέμιτα) who enquired of the gods things that it was possible to know by counting, measuring, or weighing. He said it was necessary to learn and do the things that the gods granted to humans to learn, but to try to enquire from the gods through divination those things that are unclear to humans. For, he said, the gods give signs to those to whom they are propitious. (*Memorabilia* 1.1.2–9)

If Socrates thought that a sign was given to him from the gods, he would have been less persuaded to act contrary to the signs than if someone were trying to persuade him to take as a guide for a journey a man who was blind and did not know the road instead of a man with sight who knew the road.

[10] Cf. *Mem.* 4.3.12 and *Oec.* 5.19–6.1.
[11] For δαιμονᾶν as 'to be mad', see LSJ s.v.

And he used to charge with folly others who acted contrary to the signs from the gods in the attempt to protect themselves against a loss of reputation among men. He himself used to scorn all human things in comparison to the counsel from the gods. (ibid. 1.3.4)

If someone wished to be helped in a way greater than in accord with human wisdom, Socrates used to advise him to engage in divination. For, he said, the one who knows the signs by which the gods give indications to men about matters is never without the counsel of the gods. (ibid. 4.7.10)

Xenophon, himself later judged adept in interpreting omens in sacrifices (D.L. 2.56), is not without bias or personal interest in these descriptions of Socrates' activities in and promotion of divination. They are part of his larger argument in the *Memorabilia* that, contrary to the charges on which he was convicted, Socrates was a man who 'properly respected' the gods—supremely so, in fact—in more or less conventional cultic terms. In his summation of Socrates' virtues, Xenophon places first that he was so 'properly respectful' (εὐσεβής) that he did nothing without the advice of the gods (4.8.11). Divination also, as we shall see, serves as a major justification for Socrates' philosophical mission and unusual behaviour. Also, as his injunctions closing his essay on 'The Cavalry Commander' (*Eq.Mag.* 9.8–9) show, Xenophon personally shared many of the beliefs about divination he attributes to Socrates.[12] Finally, and importantly, Xenophon was once one of those companions advised by Socrates to consult the Delphic Oracle, here on a planned military expedition (*An.* 3.1.4–8 and 11–12). But, despite Xenophon's personal interests, most elements of his description of Socrates' attitude towards and practice of divination are to be found also in Plato's writings, as we shall see, and are thus credible.

Among the charges brought against Socrates in 399 BCE was that 'he does not "recognize gods" whom the city "recognizes" but is introducing other, newly invented (καινά) *daimonia*'.[13] His accusers

[12] Cf. *Cyr.* 1.6.46. For Xenophon's extensive use of divination, particularly in the *Anabasis*, see Parker, 2004.

[13] Probably the most accurate statement of the indictment is to be found in D.L. 2.40. The critically important καινά and its cognates recur in this context in Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.2, *Ap.* 10 and 12; Pl. *Euthphr.* 3b1–6, 16a2–3, and *Ap.* 24c1, 26b5, and 27c6. Phryne, too, was charged with 'lack of respect' for introducing a καινὸς θεός (Euthias in Ath. *Deip.* 13.590d–591f). On καινός in this context, see Meijer, 1981: 231 n. 44 and Reverdin, 1945: 215. On the appropriate process for introducing 'new gods' to Athens in relationship to Socrates' *daimonion*, see McPherran, 1996: 131–9.

undoubtedly used *daimonia* in place of the expected 'gods' in part because, as both Plato and Xenophon claim, they were targeting Socrates' personal *daimonion*.[14] However hard Xenophon tries to treat it as just another form of divination (*Mem.* 1.1.3–4 and *Ap.* 12–13), it was not that. In the *Republic* (6.496c3–5) Plato's Socrates says that such a δαιμόνιον σημεῖον as his occurred to 'perhaps someone else or to no one else', and in fact Socrates is the only Greek we know to have claimed to have such a *daimonion*. For Xenophon's Socrates it is an indication that he has 'been honoured by *daimones*',[15] as is the Delphic oracle concerning his 'wisdom'. After hearing Socrates describe it, some of his jurors felt envy and ill will (φθονοῦντες) that he 'received greater (things) from the gods than did they' (*Ap.* 14).

Socrates' *daimonion* was a voice (φήμη), 'the sign of the god',[16] as he says in Plato's *Apology*, that began in his childhood, and 'whenever it occurs, it always turns me away from what I am intending to do but never urges me to an action' (31d2–4, 40b1–2).[17] It spoke unsought (Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.12). In Plato's *Apology* Socrates says that his *daimonion* in earlier times occurred frequently and even in very small matters if he was going to act 'not rightly' (40a4–7). In the *Phaedrus* (242b8–d10) the *daimonion* prevents Socrates from leaving before he 'makes himself religiously correct' (ἀφοσιώσωμαι) by recanting his previous error concerning the god, that is, his first, not 'properly respectful' (ἀσεβῆ) speech on Eros. It might also occur when he was speaking (*Ap.* 40b3–5), but Plato and Xenophon have him describe relatively few occurrences of that. It may have led him on occasion to

[14] Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.2, *Ap.* 10–14, and Pl. *Euthphr.* 3b1–7. On this see Versnel, 1990: 125–7 and Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 34–6.

[15] In Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.12 it is an indication of divine φιλία.

[16] Reeve, 2000, argues convincingly that 'the god' responsible for Socrates' *daimonion* was Apollo of Delphi. See also McPherran, 1996: 137.

[17] Cf. Pl. *Euthd.* 272e1–4, *Phdr.* 242b8–c3, and [Pl.] *Thg.* 128d3–5. Xenophon has Socrates' *daimonion* not only deter Socrates from actions but also direct him to them. In Xenophon Socrates also uses his *daimonion* to guide the activities of his companions (*Mem.* 1.1.4, 4.3.12, 4.8.1, and *Ap.* 12–13). On these and other differences between Socrates' *daimonion* in Plato and Xenophon, and on Socrates' *daimonion* in general, see Vlastos, 1991: 280–7. For attempts to minimize the differences, see Waterfield, 2004: 100–1. On the differing accounts of Socrates' *daimonion* in genuinely Platonic writings, Xenophon, and in [Pl.] *Thg.*, see Joyal, 2000: 72–103 and 128–30.

oppose the plans of his companions, and some who did not heed the warning died on their ventures.[18] In the *Theaetetus* (151a2–5) Socrates claims that his *daimonion* caused him to reject some students.[19] More importantly for his philosophical study, his *daimonion* warned him to avoid involvement in the affairs of the city.[20] In *Alcibiades* 1, Plato, if the dialogue is his,[21] has Socrates' *daimonion* the vehicle for 'the god's' instructions to him, in this case not to begin philosophical discussions with his beloved Alcibiades until Alcibiades reached the age when he would, in his quest for power, listen to Socrates. The *daimonion* is Socrates' mantic power (*μαντεία*), and in trusting it he trusts 'the god'.[22] More familiar, of course, is what Socrates made of the *daimonion*'s non-occurrence when he left home for his trial, entered the court, gave his speech, and faced the death penalty. From its absence he concludes that he is acting rightly, that all this must be to his good, and that death is a good thing.[23]

In describing his philosophical mission in Plato's *Apology*, Socrates says that he was 'assigned to do this by the god and from oracles, dreams, and in every other way a divine apportionment (*θεία μοῖρα*) assigns a human being to do anything' (33c4–7; cf. 28e4–6).[24] Socrates here does not explicitly mention his *daimonion*, probably because it only turned him away from activities. Of the methods of divination mentioned by Socrates in 33c4–7, we hear more only of the Delphic Oracle and dreams. At an indeterminate date Socrates' long-time friend Chaerephon asked the Oracle 'if anyone is wiser

[18] Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.4–5 and [Pl.] *Thg.* 128a5–129d8. On the lack of value of these particular passages as sources for the activities of Socrates' *daimonion*, see Vlastos, 1991: 280–7.

[19] Cf. [Pl.] *Thg.* 129e1–131a10 and Xen. *Smp.* 8.5.

[20] Pl. *Ap.* 31d2–6. Cf. *Rep.* 6.496c3–5.

[21] On this, see p. 3 n. 4.

[22] 103a1–b2, 105e6–106a1, 124c8–10, 127e5–7. According to the Pseudo-Platonic *Theages*, Socrates' *daimonion* followed him by 'divine apportionment' (*θείᾳ μοίρᾳ*) (128d2–3). On this see Joyal, 2000: 43–7 and 74–7.

[23] Pl. *Ap.* 40a2–c3 and 41c8–42d6. Cf. *Cri.* 54e1–2 and Xen. *Mem.* 4.8.1–6. For another possible occurrence of Socrates' *daimonion* in *Hp.Ma.* 304b7–d8, see Reeve, 2000: 31–2.

[24] On divination's role in establishing Socrates' philosophic mission, see Vlastos, 1991: 157–8 and 171–7, the various essays in Smith and Woodruff, 2000; McPherran, 1996: 208–46; and Beckman, 1979: 69–76.

than Socrates', and the Pythia responded that 'no one is wiser'.[25] Apollo, Socrates claims, could not lie, but at the time Socrates thought himself '*not* wise in any great or small matter'. Since the oracle must be true, it must be speaking in 'riddles'. Socrates therefore set out to solve the riddle, 'to show that the oracle was irrefutable' by looking for men wiser than himself among the politicians, poets, and craftsmen (20e5–22e6). So, as Plato presents it in the *Apology*, Socrates undertook his career of investigating, through dialectic, fundamental moral and political issues with poets, politicians, philosophers, and others with a reputation for wisdom.[26] Socrates thought that the god was 'assigning' and 'ordering' this activity, and that he '*had* to spend his life in philosophy' (*φιλοσοφοῦντά με δεῖν ζῆν*) (28e4–6 and 30a5–6).[27] He solved the riddle by concluding that 'neither he nor those he questioned knew anything "beautiful and good" (*καλὸν κἀγαθόν*). The others thought they had some such knowledge, but Socrates knew that he did not. In this he was wiser than they' (21d2–8). 'Perhaps, then', he concluded, 'the god is in fact wise and the oracle says that human wisdom is worth little or nothing' (23a5–7).[28]

From this and other accounts emerge some basic beliefs that Plato has Socrates hold concerning Apollo's Oracle at Delphi. Apollo did

[25] According to Xenophon's Socrates, 'Apollo answered (*ἀνεῖλεν*) that no man was more "free" (*ἐλευθεριώτερον*), more just, and more of "sound thoughts" (*σωφρονέστερον*) than Socrates' (*Ap.* 14). On this difference and why Xenophon did not mention this famous oracle in the *Memorabilia*, see Vlastos, 1991: 171 n. 73 and 288–9. On various attempts to date the oracle, see McPherran, 1996: 214 n. 90; Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 94 n. 76; and Beckman, 1979: 106 n. 53.

[26] On the oracle's influence in making Socrates a 'street-philosopher', see Vlastos, 1991: 176–7. Vlastos treats Plato's version of the oracle as reflecting a real event (171–4 and 288–9). For arguments that both Plato's and Xenophon's oracles are fictitious creations of these authors, see Stokes, 1992, and for a general survey of this question, see Waterfield, 2004: 94–5. Parke and Wormell, 1956: 1.401–3 accept the oracle as genuine, and Fontenrose, 1978: 245–6, with some misgivings, includes it (as H3) among the seventy-five historical responses of the Oracle.

[27] Cf. *Ap.* 28d5–29a2 and 33c4–7. How Socrates deduced from the oracle a divinely ordered philosophic mission and the specific nature of that mission is by no means clear. For a recent discussion raising the fundamental questions and reviewing some past attempts to answer them, see Doyle, 2004. See also McPherran, 1996, esp. 208–46 and Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 87–100.

[28] Plato's Socrates views his famous self-proclaimed 'craft of midwifery' for delivering, evaluating, and if necessary disposing of the thoughts of noble and handsome

not lie, for it was 'the established principle' (θέμις) that he not do so (21b6–7).[29] He might, though, speak in riddles. The god 'ordered' these things (30a5–6), and Socrates was acting in accordance with the god's will (κατὰ θεόν, 23b5 and 24a4) and was 'obeying' the oracle, even if it meant disobeying his fellow citizens (29d3–4; cf. 29a1–2 and b6–7 and 37e5–38a1). In so doing he was 'helping' (βοηθῶν) the god (23b7). This was all a 'subordinate's service' to the god, λατρεία (23c1) and ὑπηρεσία (30a7). Plato and Xenophon also have Socrates draw some theological conclusions from divination. The practice of it implies that the gods exist (Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.5), and to deny divination might be construed as not believing in the gods (Pl. *Ap.* 29a2–5). Xenophon's Socrates readily assents to the proposition, in the context of divination, that 'both Greeks and non-Greeks believe that the gods know all things of the present and future' (*Smp.* 4.47–9; cf. *Ap.* 13). Divination also reveals the gods' concern for individual human beings. Aristodemus, as we have seen, doubted that the gods were concerned with human beings, and as one proof against this Xenophon has Socrates introduce divination. Even though Aristodemus did not have a personal *daimonion* as Socrates did, he personally benefited from the signs and omens that the gods gave to the Athenians and to all Greeks (*Mem.* 1.4.14–15; cf. *Smp.* 4.47–8). If Aristodemus 'serves' the gods and tests them in divination, he will know that 'the divine is of such a greatness and type as to see and hear all things, to be present everywhere, and to be at the same time concerned with all things' (*Mem.* 1.4.18). In the *Timaeus* Plato has the gods create τὸ μαντεῖον so that the human race, which the demiurge wanted to be the 'best' it could be, might 'in some way grasp truth' (71d3–e2). And, finally, the gods, according to the Socrates of Plato and Xenophon, discriminate among possible recipients of divination. 'The gods give signs to those to whom they are propitious' (*Mem.* 1.1.9), both cities and individuals. Socrates' *daimonion* was special and unique, an indication that he was honoured (Xen. *Ap.* 14) and 'dear' to the gods (*Mem.* 4.3.12). And, according to Plato's

young men (*Tht.* 148e7–151d3) as the result of compulsion (ἀναγκάζει) of 'the god' (150c7–8; cf. d8–e1 and 210c6–d2). The god here for the male midwifery of males is surely Apollo, as his sister Artemis was the patroness for the female midwives of women (149b9–c3).

[29] Cf. *Rep.* 2.382e8–11.

Socrates, it was because of his concern for Athenians that Apollo sent (through his oracle) Socrates, his 'gift', as a gadfly to the city to 'awaken, persuade, and criticize each person in it' (*Ap.* 30d6–31b5).

We have reviewed this familiar material on Plato's and Xenophon's presentation of Socrates' views of the Delphic Oracle and divination because much the same views of divination are to be found throughout Plato's writings. If Socrates in fact held such views, and there is no reason from the tradition to doubt this, then he profoundly influenced Plato and through Plato may have secured for the Delphic Oracle and some other forms of divination the surprisingly respected place they held in the later philosophical tradition. Aristotle respected the prescriptions of the Oracle (*Pol.* 7.1331a24–8), and there is not, I think, a questioning of the validity of the Oracle in the Greek philosophical tradition until the Cynic Oenomaus of Gadara in the second century CE.[30] The Delphic Oracle had Socrates' and Plato's authority behind it, and one could not reject its validity without also undercutting the idea that philosophical study was a divinely motivated and supported human activity.

It was also, I proposed in the Introduction, Plato's interest in Socrates' personal *daimonion* that led him to create a distinct class of deities known as *daimones* and, important here, to devise a system of 'mechanics' of divination. Some oracles came directly to men through a human medium such as the Pythia at Delphi, but what was the 'medium' for other oracles and other forms of divination such as omens, dreams, or even Socrates' *daimonion*? Xenophon has Socrates say in his *Apology* (13) that it was not the birds and *manteis* who give divinatory signs, but the *daimonion*, and in the *Symposium* Plato seems to be building upon this Socratic thought when he has the wise Diotima explain to Socrates the nature of the *daimonic*: 'Everything *daimonic* is between god and mortal', and its power is to 'interpret and convey things from humans to gods and things from gods to humans, that is, the requests and sacrifices of the humans and the orders and returns for sacrifices of the gods'. And 'through the

[30] On Oenomaus' book criticizing oracles, see Hammerstaedt, 1988. The emperor Julian (*Orat.* 6. 199a) claimed that the Cynic Oenomaus was 'shameless and scorned all things divine and human'. See also Price, 1999: 136–7.

daimonic all divination proceeds . . . God does not mix (μείγνυται) with human, but through the *daimonic* is all association and discussion (ἡ ὁμιλία καὶ ἡ διάλεκτος) for gods with humans, both when humans are awake and asleep' (202e3–203a4). If the generic *daimonia* (τὸ δαιμόνιον)—if so we may speak of it—function in this way in divination, then Socrates' own *daimonion* is just one, but a rather special, form of it.[31]

Among the means of divination Xenophon lists are 'bird omens, words given or prompted by the gods, coincidences, and sacrifices' (*Mem.* 1.1.3). In Plato's *Apology* (33c4–7) Socrates adds dreams, and *manteis* and *chresmoidoi* (singers of oracles) appear now and then in Plato's writings as we shall see. We have seen already Plato's treatment of 'words given by the gods' in regard to Apollo's oracle concerning Socrates, but apparently chance words uttered by men, coincidences, bird omens, and omens in sacrifice held little interest for Plato,[32] though he no doubt would have included them among the 'signs' from gods which one should respect.[33]

DREAMS

For prophetic dreams there are three religious questions to be considered: are they sent by the gods; do they contain gods' instructions;

[31] If, with Reeve (2000), we take Apollo to be the god behind Socrates' *daimonion*, then the triad Apollo of Delphi—*daimonion*—Socrates fits Diotima's model perfectly, except for the fact that the communication of Socrates' *daimonion* was monodirectional, from god to human. Socrates never prayed or sacrificed to or addressed his *daimonion*, and so his *daimonion* had nothing to communicate back to the god.

[32] Vlastos (1991: 167 n. 44) notes that Plato's Socrates takes no account of the 'extraordinary *physical* events which the Greeks consider "portents" . . . unusual occurrences of lightning, thunder, earthquakes, floods, plagues, famine, eclipses, and the like—which figure so prominently as "signs" from the gods in the traditional religious view of the world . . .' If one accepts the addition of οὐ in *Ti.* 40c9–d2, Plato has Timaeus claim that those who cannot "calculate" fear eclipses and such things and use them as signs of future events.

[33] For *blasphemia* causing a bad omen in sacrifice (Pl. *Lg.* 7.800b8–c2), see pp. 59–60. Xenophon (*Oec.* 5.19–6.1) has Socrates speak of bird omens and omens in sacrifice in military and agricultural matters. In *Ti.* 71a3–72c1 Plato has Timaeus make the liver the organ of divination but seemingly deny to the customary observation of the liver of sacrificed animals any clear divinatory signs.

and do the gods through them give signs about the future?[34] In the *Apology* (33c4–7) Plato has Socrates implicitly answer the first two in the affirmative when he includes dreams among the elements by which he was assigned his philosophical mission 'by the god'.[35] Interestingly, one recurring dream that Socrates had thought was promoting his philosophical mission he reinterpreted at the very end of his life (*Phd.* 60e4–61b2):

> Many times the same dream came to me in my past life, with a different appearance at different times but saying the same things: 'Socrates', it said, 'do and work at the craft of the Muses (*μουσικήν*).' In the time before now I was assuming that it was cheering me on and encouraging me to do what I was doing, just like those giving encouragement to runners, and that so the dream was encouraging this which I was doing, since philosophy is the greatest craft of the Muses and I was doing this. But now after the trial took place and the festival of the god was preventing me from dying, I decided that if the dream many times bid me to do the craft of the Muses as it is commonly understood, I must not disobey it but must do it. For it is safer not to depart (from life) before I make myself 'religiously correct' (*ἀφοσιώσασθαι*) by obeying the dream and writing poems.

In response to his new interpretation of this recurring dream Socrates in his cell composed a *prooimion* for Apollo of Delos, whose festival was then being celebrated and was delaying his execution, and rendered some fables of Aesop into verse (61b2–7).[36] For Socrates such a dream was god-sent, gave instructions, and needed to be interpreted and obeyed. To do what it ordered was to correct a religious error, to 'make oneself religiously correct' (60e2 and 61a8–b1).

Socrates' reaction to the dream he received, two nights before his execution, demonstrates a positive response to the third question about dreams, that is, whether they can accurately predict the future.

[34] On dreams in Plato and Aristotle, see Gallop, 1996, esp. 6–57 and Pfeffer, 1976: 33–7. On Socrates' dreams, see Vlastos, 1991: 167–8 and Jackson, 1971. On dreams in the philosophical tradition in general, see Dodds, 1951: 117–21.

[35] In Pl. *Sph.* 266b2–c6 it is agreed that dream-images are produced by 'some *daimonic* device' (*δαιμονίᾳ μηχανῇ*), that they are 'products of divine making' (*θείας ἔργα ποιήσεως*). In *Ti.* 71d3–4 dreams are one of the means of divination benevolently given to humans by the 'creators'.

[36] On the difficulties of interpreting this episode in terms of Plato's theology and Socrates' 'philosophical mission', see Verdenius, 1952: 265–6 and 282.

A beautiful woman wearing white garments adapted for him the words Achilles had spoken about his own homecoming in *Il.* 9.363: 'On the third day you will come to clod-rich Phthia.' Socrates, correctly, took the dream to mean that he would not be executed the next day, as was expected, but on the following day (*Cri.* 43d8–44b5).[37]

In Plato's *Apology* Socrates simply asserts that 'Apollo does not lie', and appeals to convention (or νόμος) to justify the claim, 'for it is the established principle (θέμις) that he not do so' (21b6–7). After an examination of the nature of god in *Republic* 2.380d1–383c7, Socrates comes to the same conclusion: 'God is a simple (that is, non-complex) and truthful thing in word and deed, and he does not change himself or deceive others, not in appearances of himself nor in words nor in the sending of signs, not in dreams or day-visions' (2.382e8–11). Divinatory signs, including dreams and day-visions, come from god; god by his nature is truthful; therefore 'signs' from god 'can be trusted'. That some dreams are god sent and require obedience does not mean, nor does Plato anywhere claim, that all are such.[38] Plato's Athenian lawgiver in the *Laws* certainly does not treat as 'god sent' the dreams and visions in fear of which people fill up their homes and villages with private dedications of altars and sanctuaries (*Lg.* 10.910a1–6).[39]

Aristotle devoted a short essay to 'Divination through Sleep', and although he recognizes how widespread belief in divination through dreams is, he rejects the possibility (*Div. Somn.* 462b12–23):[40]

> It is not easy either to feel scorn or be persuaded concerning the divination that happens in sleep and is said to occur from dreams. The fact that all or many people assume that dreams have some divinatory sign (σημειῶδες) brings belief because it arises from experience, and that there is divination about some things in dreams is not unbelievable. It has some logic . . . But

[37] Cf. D.L. 2.35. For the implication that Socrates, like Achilles, would be 'going home', see Burnet, 1924: 177–8.

[38] See e.g. the nature and cause of the dreams described in *Rep.* 9.571b3–572b9 and 574d8–e2. For various non-prophetic dreams in Plato, see Gallop, 1971.

[39] In *Lg.* 5.738b5–d1 Plato does not explicitly include dreams as the causes of the foundations of sanctuaries which are to be respected.

[40] In some earlier writings such as *On Philosophy* (frag. 12 [Ross]) and *Eudemian Ethics* (8.1248a30–b3), Aristotle had apparently accepted veridical god-sent dreams.

the fact that we see no logical cause by which it might occur makes us disbelieve it.[41] The notions that the god sends dreams and that he sends them not to the best and most thoughtful people but to chance people, in addition to other illogicality, are strange.[42]

Also, in 463b13–18:

Since also some other animals dream, dreams would not be god sent nor have they come to be for this reason. Dreams are, however, *daimonic* (δαιμόνια) because nature is *daimonic* but not divine (οὐ θεία). And there is proof. Very ordinary people have prescience and vivid dreams, not because the god sends dreams but because these people whose nature is talkative and black biled see all kinds of visions.

Aristotle's claim here that dreams are *daimonic* but not divine might suggest that he imagined them sent not by gods but by *daimones*, somewhat as Diotima has it in the *Symposium*. But his claim that nature too is *daimonic* points in another direction recently explored by David Gallop (1996: 43–8). Gallop concludes that for Aristotle dreams are *daimonic* by virtue of their belonging to the natural order which is itself *daimonic*, and do not have a transcendent source. The *daimonic*, in this context, is the factor of chance. To call dreams which do occasionally turn out to be veridical *daimonic* is to treat them as 'lucky coincidences', whereas to term them 'divine' would be to imply that they are deliberately provided by an intelligent agent. To call dreams *daimonic* is to deny that they are the workings of such an agent, while conceding the appearance of agency that they present. Veridical dreams are 'uncanny', 'merely curious side-effects of a physical process'. Gallop's explanation is perhaps the best one can make of Aristotle's claim of the *daimonic* character of both dreams and nature, but, for our purposes, the major point is that Aristotle rejects the three fundamental points accepted by Socrates and Plato: some dreams are sent by the gods, contain gods' instructions, and through them gods give signs about the future. For Aristotle they are, despite appearances and common beliefs, products of natural, physical processes, not religious phenomena.

[41] Plato has Timaeus describe the anatomy of dreaming, if it so may be called, from exclusively natural causes (*Ti.* 45d7–46a2).

[42] Cf. 464a20–2.

Apart from those such as Xenophanes and Epicurus who rejected all divination (Cicero, *Div.* 1.3.5–6), Aristotle apparently stood alone in excluding dreams from divination. Even his student Dicaearchus of Messana (fl. 320–300 BCE), who rejected other forms of divination, allowed divination through dreams and through prophets inspired by divine frenzy.[43] Diogenes the Cynic mocked both those who took their dreams seriously and the interpreters of dreams,[44] but, if we can trust Cicero, virtually all other philosophers of the time, including the Socratics, early Academics, Peripatetics, and Stoics, accepted divination, including, presumably, that through dreams.

As a postscript to this discussion of divination through dreams, Epicurus may, as Cicero claims, have rejected all divination but is said to have claimed that the earliest humans received their conceptions of the gods from dream-images of them: 'Epicurus thought that from appearances in dreams humans drew their conception (ἔννοιαν) of god. For when large and human-formed images befell them in their dreams, they assumed that in truth there existed some anthropomorphic gods.'[45] This idea Epicurus had adopted from Democritus, but he apparently rejected Democritus' claim that such images prophesied the future through dreams.[46] In the Democritean–Epicurean system of physics, such images were physical objects naturally flowing from those things of which they were 'reflections' or 'images', and the originals—here the Epicurean gods—need not have intentionally sent them, as they would not have in the Epicurean concept of divinity. This all is thus not divination as the Greeks understood it so much as revelation, an unmotivated revelation through natural causes that came to the 'first humans'.[47]

[43] Cicero, *Div.* 1.3.5 and 50.113 and 2.48.100.

[44] Frags. V B 327 [G] = D.L. 6.43 and 375 [G] = D.L. 6.24.

[45] Frag. 353 [Usener] = Sext. Emp., *Math.* 9.25 and Philodemus, *On Piety*, 225–31 [O], on which see Obbink, 1989: 196–7.

[46] For Democritus' theory of 'images' emanating from the gods, see frags. *VS* 68 A 74, 77–9, 136–7, and B 142 and 166. On them prophesying the future, frag. B 166. On this theory, see Taylor, 1999: 203–16 and Henrichs, 1975: 102–4.

[47] On this Epicurean idea of man knowing god through dream-images, see Obbink, 1996: 6 and 306–9.

MANTEIS AND *CHRESMOIDOI*

Despite his use of oracles, dreams, and his own personal *daimonion*, Socrates is never presented by Plato or Xenophon as consulting, on divinatory business, a *mantis* or *chresmoidos*, although he, on occasion, often playfully, assumes the role of both.[48] Plato occasionally distinguishes the *chresmoidos*, etymologically 'a singer of oracles', from the *mantis* (Pl. *Ap.* 22c1–2, *Ion* 534d1, and *Meno* 99c2–3).[49] *Mantis* seems the official term for seer and alone is used in Athenian state documents and in Plato's *Laws*.[50] Absent from the accounts of the fourth-century philosophers are *chresmologoi*, collectors and interpreters of oracles, who in fifth-century Athens were distinct from *manteis* and made a wrong interpretation and gave bad advice at two critical moments in Athenian history—the battle of Salamis of the Persian Wars and the Sicilian Expedition. They had promoted the latter, and after the Athenian defeat, Thucydides reports (8.1), the Athenian people were angry with them. And they virtually disappear from the record.[51] *Chresmologoi* and *manteis* were often paired in the fifth century; in the fourth century *chresmologoi* virtually disappear; and in Plato, and Plato alone, we find *chresmoidoi* and *manteis* paired. The most economical solution is to assume that Plato's fourth-century *chresmoidoi* are in fact the *chresmologoi* of the fifth century, and that they specialized in the interpretation and perhaps collection of pre-existing oracles.[52]

[48] e.g. *Ap.* 39c1 and d9; *Chrm.* 169b4–5; *Cra.* 396d2–397a2, 411b3–4, and 428c6–8; *Ly.* 216d3–5; *Phdr.* 242c3–5 and 278e10–279a1; *Phlb.* 66b5; *Rep.* 4.431e7, 6.506a6–7, 7.523a8 and 538a7–b5, 9.586b5–6; *Smp.* 198a4–6; [Pl.] *Hp.Ma.* 292a3; and Xen. *Ap.* 30. Cf. Pl. *Tht.* 142c4–5. On *manteis* in Plato in general see Vlastos, 1991: 168–71 and Pfeffer, 1976, esp. 16–33, and in the *Laws* Piérart, 1974: 351–2, Morrow, 1960: 427–34, and Reverdin, 1945: 225–7. On *manteis* and *chresmologoi* in Athens see Parker, 2005*a*: 116–20, and on them and *chresmoidoi*, the distinctions between them, and their various roles in archaic and classical Greece, see Dillery, 2005.

[49] A *theomantis* occurs occasionally (Pl. *Ap.* 22c2 and *Meno* 99c2–3) but seems just another, perhaps more honorific term for *mantis* and is so treated here.

[50] Twice, but only in one passage of the *Laws* (11.933c7 and e2), Plato pairs *mantis* and *teratoskopos* ('watcher for portents'), with no indication of how they might differ. The latter seems a poetic usage. See LSJ s.v. τερασκόπος.

[51] Mikalson, 1991: 92 and 97; 2003: 141; and Dillery, 2005: 209–20.

[52] Parker (2005*a*: 111–12) comes to the same conclusion.

Whatever the case, Plato shows little interest in his *chresmoidoi* and tells us nothing of their activities. *Manteis*, too, had urged the Sicilian Expedition and felt the anger of the Athenians (Th. 8.1), but they continued to practise in Athens and very much drew the attention of Plato.

Plato describes two types of *manteis*: those who are directly inspired by gods and those who practise the study of omens and other elements of divination as a craft. Plato's Socrates saw the first type of *mantis* doing his work, like poets, under the influence of divine inspiration, a form of μανία ('madness') (*Ap.* 22b8–c4):[53]

> I realized this quickly about the poets, that they write about what they write not by wisdom (σοφίᾳ) but by their particular inborn nature (φύσει τινὶ) and by being 'possessed by a god' (ἐνθουσιάζοντες) just as the *manteis* and *chresmoidoi*.[54] For these say many good things, but do not understand any of what they say. The poets also appeared to me to be suffering some such condition.

And there is a reason why god wanted *manteis* and *chresmoidoi* to speak through inspiration and not reason (*Ion* 534c7–d4):

> The god takes away reason (νοῦς) from poets and uses them and divine (θεῖοι) *chresmoidoi* and *manteis* as servants (ὑπηρέταις) so that we who hear them may know that it is not they who are saying these things worth so much—men who do not have reason—but that god himself is the one speaking and through these he is speaking to us.

In the *Meno* Socrates explains why, as in the *Ion* above, one should call *chresmoidoi* and *manteis* 'divine' (99c2–d1):

> Those possessed by the gods (ἐνθουσιῶντες) say many true things but they have no understanding of what they say… It is deserving to call these men 'divine' (θείους) who, not having reason, succeed in many great things of those things which they say and do… Correctly, then, we would call 'divine' the *chresmoidoi* and *manteis*…

[53] For the etymological link between *mantis* and μανία, see Dillery, 2005: 168–9.

[54] ἐνθουσιάζω is, etymologically, to 'have a god *in* oneself'. On its force, see Vlastos, 1991: 168 n. 55. Aristotle claims οἱ νυμφόληπτοι καὶ θεολήπτοι are ἐνθουσιάζοντες, ἐπιπνοίᾳ δαιμονίου τινός (*EE* 1.1214a.23–4). For the antecedents and context of this statement, see Dirlmeier, 1984: 148–9. In Pl. *Phdr.* 265b3 the god who gives *manteis* their 'madness' and ἐπίπνοια is Apollo.

Some *manteis* may know 'what is going to be',[55] but for Plato this knowledge of the future has its limitations. In the *Laches* (195e8–196a3) he has the Athenian Nicias ask,

> The *mantis* must know only the signs of what will be, if someone will die or be sick or lose his money, if he will have victory or defeat in war or any other contest, but why is it more fitting for a *mantis* than for anyone else to judge that it is better for someone to suffer or not any of these things?[56]

Since the *mantis* does not understand through reason what he is saying, Plato's Timaeus sees the need for separate individuals, whom he terms *prophetai*, to study the sayings of the *manteis* and 'to distinguish by reasoning what visions were seen and how and to whom they give signs of a future, past, or present evil or good, for it is not the work of the person "in madness", in which he is in this state, to judge what he saw or heard'. Timaeus notes that some people call *manteis* what he terms *prophetai*, but he criticizes them for confusing two quite separate things: the inspired prophetic statement and the proper interpretation of that statement (71e2–72b5).

In the *Phaedrus* Plato has Socrates make a similar distinction, between prophets such as the Delphic Pythia, the priestesses at the Oracle of Zeus at Dodona, the Sibyl, and 'others' who employ 'inspired divination' (*μαντικῇ ἐνθέῳ*) and the second type of *mantis*, those who, in their right senses (*ἐμφρόνων*) search for the future through bird omens and other signs.[57] The last use thought (*διάνοια*), supposition (*οἴησις*), reason (*νοῦς*), and study (*ἱστορία*), and their art is called *oionistike*.[58] '*Mantike* is more productive and more honoured than *oionistike* to the extent that men of long ago (in their giving names to them) attest that "madness" from god is better than "sound thinking" (*σωφροσύνη*) that comes from men' (244a6–d5). Both Timaeus and Socrates are distinguishing between the *manteis* who

[55] Pl. *Chrm.* 173c3–7 and 173e10–174a1. Cf. *Tht.* 178e9–179a3. According to the Pseudo-Platonic *Minos* (314b4–5), '*Manteis* say "what the gods have in mind (*διανοοῦνται*) is discovered by *mantike*",' an assertion that, formulated in this way, is unparalleled in Plato and contrary to his theology.

[56] The author of the *Epinomis* (975c6–8) puts it somewhat differently: 'The mantic art knows only what is said, but has not understood if that is true.'

[57] For *manteis* 'trusting in birds', see Pl. *Phlb.* 67b3.

[58] *οἰωνιστική* from *οἶωνος* as 'omen.'

prophesy by divine inspiration and those who practise it as a rational craft. Both give precedence to the former, and one may find here a criticism of contemporary practices. Both types of *manteis* are found in fifth-century tragedy, but the latter predominate. In practised religion, where the sources offer little help, it appears that most if not all *manteis* belonged to those practising a craft.[59]

Euthyphro, who almost certainly prophesied through the mantic craft and not by direct inspiration, is the only *mantis* Plato has Socrates encounter. In a dialogue that ranges over several conventional conceptions of what is 'religiously correct' and 'properly respectful' of the gods, Euthyphro claims some expertise in religious matters,[60] but in his replies he does not rely on or invoke *mantike*.[61] Interesting here are Socrates' repeated references to the 'wisdom' and 'knowledge' of Euthyphro. In tragedy an individual such as Tiresias in Euripides' *Bacchae* may be presented as both a *mantis* and wise,[62] but for Plato, as we have seen, a *mantis* is truly a *mantis* through madness, lacking reason and therefore hardly able to be judged 'wise'.[63] And, in fact, Socrates does *not* consider Euthyphro wise. Each of his many comments on Euthyphro's wisdom and knowledge is tinged with gentle or not so gentle sarcasm.[64] And when Socrates virtually invites Euthyphro as a *mantis* to make a prediction as to the outcome of Socrates' trial, Euthyphro's prediction turns out, on the surface, to be wrong (3e2–6).[65] Throughout the dialogue Socrates shows little respect for Euthyphro as either a religious expert or a *mantis*.

[59] Mikalson, 1991: 92–101, 129.

[60] *Euthphr.* 3b9–c5 and e2–7, 4e9–5a2, and 13e7–9.

[61] On the relevant aspects of the *Euthyphro*, see Mikalson, 1991: 198–201. Parker's claim (2005*a*: 114) that Euthyphro was a *chresmologos* is disproved by *Euthphr.* 3e3–4. See also Dillery, 2005: 221.

[62] Mikalson, 1991: 94–5 and 147–9.

[63] It is interesting, though, that Euthyphro claims that when he reports his prophecies to the Ecclesia, 'the Athenians laugh at him as if he were mad (*μαινομένου*)' (3c1–2).

[64] 4a12–b2 and e3–5c3, 9b1–4, 12a4–5, 13e7–9, 14d4–6, and, in closing the dialogue, 15d1–16a4.

[65] Plato has phrased Euthyphro's prediction, 'Socrates will compete in his case as he wishes' (*σύ τε καὶ κατὰ νοῦν ἀγωνιῇ τὴν δίκην*) to be wonderfully ironic. To Euthyphro it must have meant that Socrates would be acquitted, in which case the prophecy was in error. In Socrates' view, however, he *did* compete in the trial as he wished, even though convicted (e.g. *Ap.* 40a2–c4 and 41c8–42a5), and, so, in a way Euthyphro could not understand, his prophecy was accurate. Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 4.8.1–2.

That Plato could have Euthyphro be laughed at, as a *mantis*, by his fellow Athenians (*Euthphr.* 3c1–2) does not speak well for Plato's view of the status of *manteis* in general, and that is reflected elsewhere in Plato. The foreigner in the *Politicus* says that the 'bearing' (*σχῆμα*) of priests and *manteis* was 'full of arrogance (*φρονήματος*)' and that they received a 'revered reputation because of the magnitude of their undertakings', but in *Rep.* 3.389d1–5 Plato follows *Od.* 17.383–4 in placing *manteis* among the artisans (*δημιουργοί*) with physicians and ship-carpenters.[66] In the *Politicus* *manteis* are deemed unworthy of being statesmen (*πολιτικοί*) because their knowledge is of a 'service' type (*διακόνου*) since they are merely 'interpreters' (*ἑρμηνευταί*) (290c3–6), and that they serve as 'interpreters for humans from gods' does not seem to raise their status in terms of governing a state. In the *Phaedrus*, when Socrates describes, in descending order, the lives into which the fallen souls will be reborn, he places *manteis* along with individuals involved in mysteries (*τελεστικόν*) into the fifth class. The first and best class includes philosophers, the ninth and last is of tyrants. The *manteis* rank immediately below physicians and physical trainers and just above poets and others involved in the mimetic arts—the last two groups much in disfavour with Plato (248c5–e3). And, in more practical terms, in the *Laches* Socrates proposes to the future general Nicias a law that, on a military expedition, 'the *mantis* not command the general, but the general command the *mantis*', since the general knows better the things that happen and will happen in war (198e2–199a5). This is a not very subtle allusion to the claim that Nicias' excessive dependence on seers in the final days of the Sicilian Expedition caused the great loss of Athenian lives.[67]

In the political contexts of the *Republic* and *Laws* *manteis*—apparently not those inspired by god—do not fare much better. In *Rep.* 3.389d1–5 Socrates imagines that a *mantis* might lie, and in 2.364b6–365a3 it is they and *ἀγυρταί* ('begging priests', a derogatory term) who, as we have seen, promise the rich to 'cure' their injustices with pleasant sacrifices, incantations, and rituals and even, if they so wish, to harm with magic their enemies, at little cost. These *manteis* are charlatans and liars, and they practise magic.[68] Over forty years

[66] Cf. *Smp.* 188c7–d1.

[67] On this claim, see Thuc. 7.50.4; Plut. *Nic.* 23.1–6; and Mikalson, 1991: 163.

[68] In Pl. *Chrm.* 173c2–7 'sound thinking' (*σωφροσύνη*) would distinguish between real and quack *manteis*.

later in the *Laws* Plato has his Athenian lawgiver reiterate these criticisms. *Manteis* might simply give bad, immoral advice (11.913a6–c1). A *mantis* might be one of those atheists without control over their pleasures and pains, with good memories and an ability to learn quickly, but, despite being called 'of good nature' (εὐφυής), 'full of deceit and treachery' (10.908c6–d4). *Manteis* are, again, among those who claim the gods can be convinced by gifts to forgive injustices (10.885d1–e1).[69] They might also, as in the *Republic*, be engaged in magic, and, if found guilty of this, be executed (11.933c6–e2). Aristotle in a troubled passage of the *Eudemian Ethics* (8.1248a30–b3) seems to be writing approvingly of *manteis* who, like those favoured in Plato, succeed by divine inspiration without the use of reason,[70] but in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (4.1127b12–21) he ranks *manteis* among charlatans (ἀλαζονευόμενοι) who for profit claim qualities that are advantageous to others but whose non-existence escapes detection.

The Cynic Diogenes said that when he saw dream interpreters, *manteis*, and those who listened to them, he thought there was nothing more foolish than man (frag. V B 375 [G] = D.L. 6.24), and despite his and Plato's own comments on *manteis*, one still finds a few signs of lingering respect for them in the very practical world of the *Laws*. For the Cretan city the *exegetai*, priests, *manteis*, and guardians of the laws are to finish up the details of scheduling of religious festivals (8.828b3–7) and are to determine religious aspects of murder trials (9.871c3–d2).

DIVINATION AS A DETERMINANT OF THE 'SERVICE TO THE GODS'

Ancient Greek religion had no specific set of god-given moral commandments nor a set of divinely inspired canonical texts, and it has become a virtual truism that this was not a 'revealed' religion.[71] In the

[69] For Plato's rejection of this notion, see pp. 52, 59, and 98.

[70] See Dirlmeier, 1984: 491.

[71] e.g. Parker 2005*a*: 367, 'general truth that Greek religion was not based on revelation'. Also Finley, 1985: p. xiv, 'Greek religion had . . . no revelation.'

philosophical tradition, however, we shall find that the major elements of the 'service to the gods' are treated as revealed to humans by gods, and particularly by Apollo of Delphi, through divination.[72] These revelations were occasional, originating in a wide variety of different situations over time, like the decisions of the American Supreme Court, and, because they were never united in one collection, they lack the appearance of systematic and complete revelation, but, taken in sum, in the philosophic tradition such revelations are claimed to have determined most of the cultic side of Greek religion.

Many of Apollo's mantic functions in these areas are summarized in this interchange between Adeimantus and Socrates as they come to the end of founding the Second City in Plato's *Republic* (4.427b1–c4):

> ADEIMANTUS: What part of lawmaking might still be left for us?
> SOCRATES: Nothing for us, but for Apollo in Delphi the greatest, best, and first of the laws.
> ADEIMANTUS: Of what type are these?
> SOCRATES: The foundings of sanctuaries, sacrifices, and other cult 'services' to the gods, *daimones*, and heroes, and the burials of the dead and what 'services' (ὑπηρετοῦντες) we must provide the dead so as to have them propitious. We do not know such things and, as we found a city, if we have sense, we will trust no one else and will use no other *exegetes* than our ancestral one. And this god, seated on the *omphalos* of the earth, as the ancestral *exegetes* for all humans, gives instructions (ἐξηγεῖται) about such things.

In the *Republic* Apollo's instructions about sanctuaries, sacrifices, and other cult 'service' to the gods and all such matters will become 'laws' of the new city. For its citizens these laws, with their divine origins, become the authority on religious matters, and Xenophon's Socrates recommended and followed carefully the Pythia's prescription that

[72] It is noteworthy that Plato directs attention almost exclusively to Delphic Apollo, and that even the Apollo of his Cretan city is apparently not 'oracular'. On Apollo in the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 402–11 and 438–9. On the Delphic Oracle in the *Laws*, see Bowden, 2005: 84–6.

'to act with "proper respect" (εὐσεβῶς) about sacrifices, the "service" to ancestors, or any such matter is to act in accordance with the law of the city' (*Mem.* 1.3.1; cf. 4.3.16).

Plato's Socrates thus entrusts to Apollo of Delphi the founding of sanctuaries, the establishment of sacrifices, other cult of the gods, and the treatment of the dead. We now treat each of these individually, and will add an item absent from Socrates' list, in fact absent in large part from the *Republic* itself: Apollo's role in the Greek conception of pollution.

In the *Republic* Socrates leaves it to Apollo to direct the founding of new sanctuaries, much as Aristotle gives a Delphic oracle (μαντεῖον πυθόχρηστον) a role in determining sanctuaries (*Pol.* 7.1331a24–8). As with sacrifices and festivals (see Ch. 2), Plato's lawgiver in the *Laws* takes more initiative in religious matters than does the Socrates of the *Republic*, and, according to him, 'it is not an easy thing to found sanctuaries and gods. To do such a thing rightly is a matter of some great thought' (10.909e3–5). First, one must respect pre-existing sanctuaries. The lawgiver gives three possible reasons for their existence, and each, importantly, is based directly or indirectly on divination. Oracles from Delphi or Dodona or from Ammon of Libya, or some old stories (παλαιοὶ λόγοι) that resulted from visions, or reported divine inspiration had led to the consecration of statues, altars, and temples and had marked off sanctuaries for each of the gods, 'and the lawgiver must not disturb even the smallest one of these in any way' (*Lg.* 5.738b5–d1).[73] All the pre-existing sanctuaries and their altars, statues, and temples in Plato's Cretan colony thus derive from divine revelation in some form, as will, in fact, all of the sanctuaries in Plato's *Republic*. For the lawgiver of the *Laws*, as for Aristotle, divine restrictions are important, but there are also many matters he feels competent to address as he creates new sanctuaries. If there are no religious restrictions or traditions affecting the selection, 'one ought to build sanctuaries in a circle around the *agora* and the whole city, in high places for the purposes of both "security" (εὐέρκεια) and "cleanliness" (καθαρότης)' (*Lg.* 6.778c4–6) as well as in the lands of the rural tribes. Aristotle, too, is concerned that the site of

[73] For similar reasons for establishing sanctuaries and the respect due them, see also [Pl.] *Epi.* 985c1–d1.

a sanctuary be secure 'against the neighbouring parts of the city', but adds that it should have a 'conspicuousness (ἐπιφάνεια) in regard to the excellence of its position', with those sanctuaries excepted which the law or some Delphic oracle sets apart (*Pol.* 7.1331a24–30). As a sidelight, Xenophon's Socrates offers a valuable hint about the worshipper's reaction to such prominent locations. Temples and altars, he says, should have a very conspicuous place (χώραν . . . πρεπωδεστάτην), one that both stands out clearly and is off the beaten path, for 'it is pleasant to make a prayer just on seeing them and to approach them being in a state of religious purity' (ἁγνῶς ἔχοντας) (*Mem.* 3.8.10).[74]

Private sanctuaries are a quite different matter. Among his recommendations for creating a radical democracy, Aristotle includes 'bringing together the [ceremonies?] of private sanctuaries into a few, public ones' and all other devices by which the citizens can be mixed together and the old associations be broken up (*Pol.* 6.1319b24–7). Plato's Athenian lawgiver in the *Laws* would banish such private sanctuaries altogether, even when they can make the claim of origins from divine signs.[75] He proposes a law that 'no one is to possess sanctuaries in private homes' (10.909d6–8 and 910c8),[76] and in his discussion of this law he extends the prohibition to the private foundation of sanctuaries generally:

> It is the usual practice for all women especially and for men who are weak in any way or in danger or helpless in whatever way, and, in the contrary case, who receive some prosperity, to consecrate whatever is at hand and to vow sacrifices and to promise the establishment of sanctuaries to the gods, *daimones*, and heroes. They are roused (to do this) because of fears in omens and dreams, and so also remembering these many visions and trying to create cures for each of them they found altars and sanctuaries and fill

[74] i.e., probably, free from any 'pollution' that would not allow entrance into the sanctuary. See Parker, 1983: 162. We should very much like to know the Greek word for the *compositi*, 'with composure', the disposition in which Seneca claims Aristotle said 'we enter sanctuaries'. Aristotle went on, according to Seneca, to say 'we cast down our eyes and draw in our togas when we are about to approach a sacrifice, and, in general, assume an outward appearance of modesty (*modestia*)' (frag. 14 [Rose] = Seneca, *Q.Nat.* 7.30.1).

[75] On this law against private sanctuaries, see Reverdin, 1945: 228–31 and 240.

[76] The lawgiver will allow, however, 'private sanctuaries of the θεοὶ πατρῷοι whose rites are celebrated according to the law' (4.717b4–5). These gods are concerned with 'ancestry' and family as distinct from cult associations. A god such as Apollo Patroös would apparently have a place in domestic cult as the lawgiver envisages it. See Morrow, 1960: 462–3.

their houses and the open areas of their villages with them and every place where some such person happens to do this.

Here even private sanctuaries are founded because of omens and dreams, elements of divination. The lawgiver apparently objects to the clutter but is more concerned that by appealing to the gods of such private sanctuaries those who practise injustice may think, as we have seen, that they can avoid punishments for their crimes and thereby become more unjust (*Lg.* 10.909e5–910b4). Such individuals are to be ordered to transfer their private sanctuaries to public ones, and those who refuse may be fined or, if acting out of serious 'lack of respect' for the gods (*ἀσέβεια*), may be punished with death (10.910b8–e4).

In concluding our discussion of sanctuaries, we note that Zeno claimed that cities not only should not build dedications for the gods but also should not construct sanctuaries or temples (or law-courts or gymnasia!). They are merely the constructions of builders and lowly artisans, not 'worthy of the gods', not 'worth much', and not 'venerable'.[77]

The task of arranging and making law the new festivals and their sacrifices, also cultic elements, is to be done, the Athenian lawgiver of the *Laws* says, 'with oracles from Delphi'. The question for the Oracle is, 'Sacrificing which sacrifices and to which gods would it be better and more desirable (*ἄμεινον καὶ λῷον*) for the city?' (*Lg.* 8.828a1–4).[78] The god and *daimon* will assign the arrangements for sacrifices and dances, to whom and when they are to be made (7.804a5–b3). The Athenian reserves for the lawgiver's judgement 'when and how many they, or at least some of them, should be'. In the new city there are to be at least 365 sacrifices, and the lawgiver entrusts to a commission of *exegetai*, priests and priestesses, *manteis*, and guardians of the law to sort out details he cannot cover (8.828a1–b7). The arrangements for sacrifices and dances of festivals may be adjusted for the first ten years, but then are to be considered unchangeable.

[77] *SVF* 1.264, 265, and 267. For *ἅγιον* as 'venerable' in regard to temples and such things, see Parker, 1983: 147 n. 16.

[78] Plato puts the question into the form and language most commonly found in historical (versus legendary or folkloric) examples of Delphic oracles. See Fontenrose, 1978: 37–9.

Should a change become necessary, the guardians of the laws are to make it only with the unanimous consent of the magistrates, the whole people, and the oracles of the gods (6.772b5–d4). In a much different context Theopompus has Apollo of Delphi prefer the humble but regular offerings of a common man over the magnificent sacrifices of a rich one (Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.16), and Theophrastus invokes Apollo's authority both in opposition to and in support of traditional Greek animal sacrifice (frags. 8.1–3 and 4.5–10). And under Adeimantus' 'cult services' we might place Apollo's approval or disapproval of the dedication of war spoils taken from Greeks (*Rep.* 5.469e7–470a3).

Socrates and Adeimantus in the *Republic* will leave to Delphi also 'the burials of the dead and what "services" we must provide the dead so as to have them propitious'. So, later in the *Republic*, Socrates has Apollo consulted on the status (divine or *daimonic*) of his good, dead guardians (5.469a4–6) and on the elaborate and unusual funeral rites for philosopher-kings (7.540b7–c2). In the *Laws* the lawgiver will ask Apollo for approval of the special exception that priests attend the funerals of the auditors (12.947b3–d5). It is noteworthy that Plato does not, in fact, have Apollo establish the conventions of funerals and cult of the common dead. In the *Laws* the lawgiver himself does this.[79] But Plato asks Apollo to consider exceptions to the usual practices, special privileges that suggest the elevation of the select group above the level of the ordinary dead, as for the deceased guardians and philosopher-kings of the *Republic* and the highly respected auditors of the *Laws*, themselves all priests of Apollo. Approval of the exceptions implies approval of a more than human status, heroic or *daimonic*, for each group. Similarly, it seems, the historic Delphic Oracle on occasion did judge, as Plato has it do, on the heroic status of the recently dead.[80]

In the case of the auditors, the question is whether or not priests and priestesses may attend their funerals without incurring pollution, and pollution and purification from it are major elements of the portfolio of Plato's Apollo. In the *Cratylus* (405a7–b4) Socrates speaks of Apollo's roles in giving purification (*κάθαρσις*) through

[79] e.g. 4.717d7–718a6 and 12.958d3–960b5.
[80] For examples, Fontenrose, 1978, oracles H37, 49, 59, and 69.

both the medical arts (of the body) and the mantic art (of the soul), and in the Cretan city the pollutions that result from murder, suicide, and such things are to be dealt with 'in accordance with the law brought from Delphi about these matters' (*Lg.* 9.865a1–b2, 871b6–d2, 873d1–4). A daring proposal in the *Republic*, violating the pan-Hellenic unwritten laws on incest, that there be a law in the new city that 'brothers and sisters may marry', is to take effect only 'if the Pythia approves' (5.461e2–3).[81] In Chapter 2 we saw that Plato introduced into the *Laws* a college of *exegetai* to interpret the laws derived from Apollo on matters of pollution and religion in cases of homicide, but these *exegetai*, apparently, did not arrive at their interpretation of these laws through divination.

For the cities of the *Republic* and *Laws* Apollo was thus to give laws on religious and cultic matters, but in the *Laws* Plato has the god involved in the whole of Sparta's constitutional affairs. In early times the Heraclidae had used Apollo and other *manteis* when they organized the coalition of Dorian Argos, Messene, and Sparta in their occupation of the Peloponnese, and this was one factor that had led them (mistakenly) to expect that the arrangement would be stable (3.685b7–686b4). The *Laws* opens with the claim, never challenged, that Apollo was responsible for the arrangement (διάθεσις) of Sparta's laws, as was Zeus for those of Crete,[82] and the Athenian lawgiver imagines how 'some god who foresaw the future and was concerned for the Spartans as kin' (κηδόμενος)—surely Apollo—reformed the single monarchy into a better, double one by causing the birth of twin kings (3.691d5–e1).[83]

Unlike for *manteis*, there is, in the early philosophical tradition, no questioning of the validity or accuracy of Delphic Apollo's oracles. On the contrary, Plato from his earliest descriptions of Socrates to his

[81] Years later, in *Lg.* 8.838a4–c1, Plato has his lawgiver eliminate such incest by promoting the common claim that such acts are 'by no means "religiously correct" (ὅσια) but are god hated (θεομισῆ) and the most shameful of shameful things'.

[82] 1.624a4–5. Cf. 2.662c5–7, 3.696a4–b1. Plato does not mention Lycurgus who, in some non-Spartan accounts, brought back the Spartan constitution or parts of it as an oracle from Delphi (Hdt. 1.65, Plut. *Lyc.* 5–6). On this tradition, see Morrow, 1960: 33–4.

[83] For Spartan dependence on the Delphic Oracle for purely political matters, see Parker, 1985. In the *Critias* Plato makes Poseidon the lawgiver for his mythical Atlantis (113e6–114a4 and 119c5–d2). See Ch. 5.

last writings shows great respect for it, explaining in the *Apology* how the oracle proved true and how Socrates used it as a guide of his life, and entrusting it with critical matters of cult, pollution, the dead, and occasional other troublesome issues in the cities he 'founded'.[84] Plato's trust in the Delphic Oracle, the type of 'inspired prophecy' he approved, and in divination in general, with the exception of most *manteis*, puzzles some modern scholars,[85] but I think it is owed, ultimately, to his respect for Socrates' beliefs in this area. From Xenophon it is clear that the real Socrates held many of the beliefs about divination with which Plato credits him, and Plato, I think, was unwilling to reject this element of the Socratic tradition. It shaped Plato's own thoughts on divination, Apollo, and the gods in general, and it was a means, like myth, that allowed him to express his own belief that not *all* matters of human life can be explained solely by human reason.

Plato in the *Symposium* has Eryximachus the physician claim that all sacrifices and the activities of divination (*μαντική*) concern 'the partnership of gods and men with one another' (*ἡ περὶ θεούς τε καὶ ἀνθρώπους πρὸς ἀλλήλους κοινωνία*) and that divination is the creator (*δημιουργός*) of the 'affection' (*φιλία*) of gods and men (188b7–c1 and c7–d1). Virtually all the instances of divination we have surveyed, and especially those of Apollo, can be understood in these terms: the injunctions on how to act with 'proper respect'; instructions on founding sanctuaries, making sacrifices, performing hymns, holding festivals, erecting dedications, and doing other cult activities that are pleasing to the gods and build 'affection' with them; and laws on how to avoid or purify pollutions that would sever the partnership of men and gods. Similarly based on the mutual 'affection' of gods and men are the special revelations to humans because the god is particularly concerned for them, as Apollo was claimed to

[84] On the major importance of Apollo and the Delphic Oracle to the religion, education, and society of the new city in the *Laws*, see Reverdin, 1945: 89–106, 163–7, and 249. In *Republic* 3.415c5–7, Socrates, to persuade the citizens, is willing to 'invent' an oracle that 'the city will be corrupted when the silver or bronze guardians (vs. the golden ones) guard it', but he does not go so far as to attribute it to the Delphic Oracle.

[85] e.g. Versényi, 1982. See also the discussions in Smith and Woodruff, 2000 and Dodds, 1951: 222–3.

be for Socrates, the Athenians, and the Spartans. Likewise motivated by divine 'affection' would be the divinely sent indications of the future in matters such as warfare, farming, and house-building that allow humans to find success or avoid failure. So, too, finally, according to Socrates in Plato's *Phaedrus* (244d5–245a1), *mantike* could free men from diseases, sufferings, and even real madness by recommending prayers and 'services' to god, purifications, and rituals.[86] There, too, Plato has Socrates say that, in addition to the Sibyl and the others who practise 'inspired divination' (μαντικῇ ἐνθέῳ), 'the prophetess in Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona in their (prophetic) madness have produced many fine things for Greece, both for private individuals and states' (244a8–b6). As Xenophon has Socrates present it in the *Memorabilia* (1.4.14–15), divination is one of the clearest proofs of the gods' concern for humans both as a group and individually.[87]

In concluding this chapter we stress that the philosophers, and especially Plato, attributed to divination the origins and motivations for most if not all of the cultic elements of 'service to the gods'. How humans knew of the gods themselves we will examine in Chapter 6, but here we have seen that the founding of sacrifices and festivals, of sanctuaries with their altars, statues, and temples, of dances in honour of the gods, of practices concerning the dead, and of laws concerning pollution all results from divination, most from the Oracle of Delphi, a particular interest of Plato, but some from dreams, visions, and

[86] The 'services' here need not be Corybantic rites, as suggested by de Vries, 1969: 117.

[87] In this regard Chrysippus' argument for the validity of divination is of interest (*SVF* 2.1192 = Cicero, *Div.* 1.38.82–3): 'If there are gods and they do not declare to men what things are going to be, either they do not cherish (*diligunt*) men, or they do not know what will happen, or they think that it is of no importance to men to know what will be, or they do not think it is worthy of their own majesty to give advance signs to humans of what will be, or not even the gods themselves are able to give signs. But gods do cherish us, for they are beneficent to and friends of the race of men. And they do know what things have been established and designated by themselves. And it is of importance to us to know what things will happen, for we will be more cautious if we know. And the gods do not consider this alien to their own majesty, because nothing is more outstanding than beneficence. Nor are they unable to foreknow things that will happen . . . Gods exist, and therefore they give signs. And, if they give signs, they do give methods to us for the art of divination, for otherwise they would be giving signs in vain. And, if they give us these methods, divination does not not exist. Therefore divination exists.'

other signs. Any changes to these elements therefore had to be approved by Delphic Apollo. These cult elements of the 'service to the gods' are thus not only 'pleasing' to the gods, they are established by their orders. The philosophers may, in fact, have taken this view from the popular tradition. Those real cults about which we are best informed, the cult of Apollo at Delphi and of Demeter at Eleusis, were established even in their details by the deities themselves, at least as it is represented in our best sources for the Greek view, the *Homeric Hymns* to Apollo and Demeter. For the vast majority of practised cults in the classical period we have no such information about the circumstances of their origin, but for some, among them the cult structure of the state deities in the Erechtheum at Athens, the cult of Dionysus at Icarion, and the cult of Amphiaraus at Oropus, there are indications that they, too, resulted from divine will revealed through divinatory signs. Most minor cults, too, must have had myths, now lost, which explained their origins, and it is very likely that these myths, like the explanations of Plato for his cult foundations, contained an element of divination. It is only a hypothesis, but one worth considering, that the Greeks believed most cult elements of sacrifices, sanctuaries, and laws of pollution and caring for the dead and such matters were owed ultimately to orders issued by the concerned gods through the various means of divination, that they were, in fact, 'revelation' from the gods.

4

'Proper Respect for the Gods' and 'Religious Correctness'

> Are 'religious correctness' (*ὁσιότης*) and 'proper respect' (*εὐσέβεια*) 'service to the gods' (*θεραπεία τῶν θεῶν*)?
>
> (Socrates in Plato, *Euthyphro* 13b4)

We have examined thus far a number of elements of the 'service to the gods', and we now focus on its two main components, *εὐσέβεια* and *ὁσιότης*, as represented in the philosophical tradition. We initially concentrate on distinctions between them because in modern philosophical studies they are almost universally treated as synonymous, both often translated as 'piety' or 'holiness'.[1] Classicists and scholars of Greek religion also claim, to quote Dover, 'a strong tendency to synonymy of *eusebês* and *hosios*'.[2] The modern philosophical usage of these terms is clearly wrong. Classicists, I think, seriously overstate the synonymy, with misleading consequences. There are important

[1] See pp. 6–7.

[2] Dover, 1974: 248. As examples of the claimed synonymy of *εὐσεβής* and *ὅσιος* Dover offers Antiphon 1.5, 6.33 and 48, Dem. 19.70 and 23.25, 29, 38, and 78, Lysias 12.24, Xen. *Ap.* 19, Eur. *Hel.* 1021 and frag. 388. Eur. frag. 388 is irrelevant. In two of his examples different actions are being described. In Antiphon 1.5 *εὐσέβεια* involves not betraying a mother, *ἀνοσιότης* not seeking vengeance for a murder. Likewise in Dem. 23.25, 29, 38, and 78 *εὐσέβεια* concerns establishing a murder law, *ὁσιότης* where a killing may take place. Dover's only compelling examples are (1) Antiphon 6, where perjurers are once described as *ἀσεβεστάτους* (33) and once as *ἀνοσιωτάτους* (48), and (2) claims that an individual might become *ἀνόσιος* from *εὐσεβής* (Xen. *Ap.* 19 and E. *Hel.* 1021). That one individual or act may be described by both terms (Dem. 19.70 and Lysias 12.24; cf. Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.11, below) is not proof that the terms were synonymous. In short, the few relevant examples Dover offers are insufficient to justify the claim that there was 'a strong tendency to synonymy of *eusebês* and *hosios*'. Dover

distinctions between 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect', and they are maintained quite consistently by Plato and the rest of the philosophical tradition. Confusion and inaccuracy as to the meaning and application of both terms has inhibited the understanding of what is, in modern terms, Greek 'piety', in ancient Greek terms, 'service to the gods'. After I have treated the individuals and the actions with which 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect' are associated and have summarized the nature of each, I will turn to the distinctions between them, the cause behind them—on what personal characteristics do 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect' depend?—and then to the many rewards that result from them.

'Proper respect' and 'religious correctness' are occasionally paired, as in the quotation that opens this chapter or as when Xenophon says of Socrates, 'No one ever saw or heard Socrates doing or saying anything "not respectful" (*ἀσεβές*) or "religiously incorrect" (*ἀνόσιον*)' (*Mem.* 1.1.11). Such pairings tell us little of how these terms relate to one another except that they are somehow distinct. Usually, in fact, they are treated as separate, except in cases of law, whether in Plato's *Laws* or in Athenian state law. In each is a law entitled 'on "lack of respect"' (*ἀσέβεια*), under which charges of 'religious incorrectness' may be brought. For example, in *Laws* 10.910c6–e4 the lawgiver is describing how those who wrongly found private sanctuaries or wrongly sacrifice fall under the provisions of his law on 'lack of respect':

> If someone, not a child but a 'religiously incorrect man' (*ἀνόσιος*), is revealed to have committed an act of 'lack of respect' (*ἀσεβήσας . . . ἀσέβημα*), either having founded a sanctuary on private property or having sacrificed to some gods on public property, since he is not pure (*καθαρός*) when he sacrifices, let him be punished with death. Let the guardians of the laws, after judging whether it was a child's act or not, bring him into the law court and impose upon him a trial for 'lack of respect' (*ἀσεβείας*).

The man, because he is not 'pure' when he sacrifices, is 'religiously incorrect', and thereby commits an act of 'lack of respect' for which he is subject to a trial. In Plato's Cretan city and, in fact, in Athens,

describes as 'unusual and somewhat artificial' the distinction found in Lycurgus, *Leoc.* 15 (*πρός τε τοὺς θεοὺς εὐσεβῶς καὶ πρὸς τοὺς γονέας ὁσίως*), a distinction that we have found to be the usual one (Ch. 1, n. 20). For one apparent example of the synonymity of *ὅσιος* and *εὐσεβής* in Pl. *Euthphr.* 14b2–7, see below, n. 82.

there were legal trials only for 'lack of respect', not for 'religious incorrectness'.[3] Clearly, in the law at least, acts of 'religious incorrectness' could be subsumed under the rubric 'lack of respect' for the gods. In *Euthyphro* 5c7–d5 we can see Plato's Socrates modulating from the Athenian law on 'lack of respect' to 'religious correctness'. He notes that Meletus has indicted him on a charge of 'lack of respect'. He then asks Euthyphro to tell him 'what kind of things are "properly respectful" and "not respectful" '. Immediately he follows with the question, 'Is not what is "religiously correct" the same in every activity?' And so the discussion of 'religious correctness' begins and 'proper respect' disappears from the conversation.[4] The thought of 'proper respect' leads to 'religious correctness', but, again, only in the initial context of state law.

When we leave the realm of formal law, when there is discussion only of 'virtues' (*ἀρεταί*), 'religious correctness' (*ὁσιότης*), not 'proper respect for the gods' (*εὐσέβεια*), is featured. 'Religious correctness' is not one of the cardinal Platonic virtues (justice, wisdom, courage, 'sound thinking' [*σωφροσύνη*]),[5] but when the list is extended beyond these,[6] we find only 'religious correctness', not 'proper respect for the gods'.[7] As we have seen, both may be

[3] On the law on *ἀσέβεια* in Athens, see Parker, 2005*b*: 63–8 and 1996: 207–10, 214–15; Todd, 1993: 307–15; Versnel, 1990: 122–31; and MacDowell, 1978: 197–202.

[4] For modern commentators who mistakenly view *εὐσεβής* and *ὅσιος* as synonymous, Socrates' transition from *εὐσέβεια* to *ὁσιότης*, of course, causes no difficulties. One might better ask the question of why Socrates changes the topic from *εὐσέβεια* to *ὁσιότης*, a question that leads, in turn, to the question of why Plato generally puts *ὁσιότης* but not *εὐσέβεια* among the virtues—for which see the following discussion.

[5] e.g. Pl. *Rep.* 4.427e6–10 and *Lg.* 1.631c5–d1.

[6] e.g. Pl. *Prt.* 325a1 and c6–d5, 329c2–6, 330b3–6, 331a6–c2, 349b1–d5; *La.* 199d7–8; *Grg.* 505b1–5, 507b1–c7; and *Men.* 78d2–79a5. Cf. *Rep.* 3.395c5. On 'religious correctness' included among the virtues, see Bluck, 1961, on *Men.* 74a3. Sedley (1999: 313) claims that 'in his early dialogues Plato had portrayed Socrates as operating with a fivefold list of cardinal virtues: justice, moderation, wisdom, courage, and holiness. As he moved out of his Socratic phase, starting perhaps with the *Meno*, he had quietly dropped holiness from the list.' In Pl. *Prt.* 323e3–324a1 'lack of respect' is included among the vices. Weiss (1994: 279–82) argues that 'holiness' is not a matter of 'wisdom' and 'knowledge' and is excluded from the virtues when those are the context of the discussion.

[7] Aristotle treats neither 'proper respect' (*εὐσέβεια*) nor 'religious correctness' (*ὁσιότης*) independently as a virtue in his ethical works. For the former see Broadie,

subsumed under the larger category of justice,[8] but why, when Plato moves beyond this, does he feature 'religious correctness' and not 'proper respect for the gods'?

We could wish that Plato had had Socrates somewhere discuss these questions with an interlocutor:

1. Is everything 'religiously correct' also 'properly respectful of the gods'?
2. Is everything 'properly respectful of the gods' also 'religiously correct'?
3. Are, then, 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect for the gods' the same thing?

My provisional answers would be: to (1), yes (but this is nowhere explicitly stated in our sources); to (2), not necessarily; and to (3), no. 'Not necessarily' for the second question, because we find acts that are 'properly respectful' occasionally are 'religiously incorrect'. 'No' to the third question because (*a*) these terms sometimes can be used of the same actions and people, but, as we shall see, sometimes one term is associated more with one kind of action or person than the other, and, (*b*), these terms view actions and people from a different perspective. 'Religious correctness' (ὁσιότης) judges whether they conform to Greek religious law, traditions, and precedents. 'Proper respect' (εὐσέβεια) indicates rather the attitudinal environment, whether the action or person shows appropriate honour for the deity. But let us see, as we further investigate 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect', whether these distinctions hold and if they can be better and more fully formulated.

2003, who finds an 'implicit definition' of 'proper respect' only in *EN* 10.1179a22–32, for which see p. 180.

[8] Pl. *Euthphr.* 11e7–12a2 and 12e6–9 (proposition 1 in Ch. 1). Cf. [Pl.] *Def.* 412e14–413a2. For the argument that 'piety' is not treated as a cardinal virtue by Plato because it is a part of 'justice' and hence is subsumed under the larger category of the cardinal virtue justice, see McPherran, 2006: 90–1 and 2000*b*: 322–5. Such arguments do not distinguish between εὐσέβεια and ὁσιότης, and hence do not make the distinctions made here.

MATTERS MOSTLY OF 'RELIGIOUS CORRECTNESS'

> It is necessary for the city, so far as it can, to possess family units as 'religiously correct' and as successful as possible.
>
> (Plato, *Laws* 9.877d8–e2)

In the *Laches* Plato has Socrates offer as one definition of the virtuous man one who knows both what is to be feared (*τὰ δεινά*) and what good things are (199d7–e1):

> Do you think, Nicias, that this man would lack 'sound thinking' (*σωφροσύνη*) or both justice and 'religious correctness', the one man for whom it is fitting to be on his guard about the gods and about humans and about things that are to be feared or not and similarly to procure for himself the good things since he knows how to associate (*προσομιλεῖν*) (with gods and men) correctly?

Socrates combines here behaviour towards men and gods, and if we separate out that towards gods, we find 'religious correctness', associated with the virtues 'sound thinking' and justice, involves both a cautiousness in regard to the gods and a knowledge of how to associate with them correctly.[9] Or, put another way, one who is cautious about the gods and knows how to associate with them rightly would be 'religiously correct'. All of this well suits the instances of 'religious correctness' we describe below.

Sacrifice

> What do you say 'religiously correct' and 'religious correctness' are? Are they not some knowledge of both sacrificing and praying?
>
> (Socrates, in Plato, *Euthyphro* 14b2–4)

The individual who did not have knowledge of sacrifice, who sacrificed in violation of one of the 'rules' of sacrifice, like the polluted individual in *Laws* 10.910c6–e1, would be 'religiously incorrect'. He would be, however, subject to the overarching laws on 'lack of

[9] For questions whether Socrates is expressing his own views here, see Weiss, 1994: 279–81.

respect'.[10] Socrates' friend in the Pseudo-Platonic *Minos* (315b8–c2), in describing different customs among different peoples, claims that 'for us it is not the law/custom (*νόμος*) to sacrifice human beings, but it is "religiously incorrect". But the Carthaginians do sacrifice humans, thinking it is "religiously correct" and legal for them to do so.' For Theophrastus, also, it is not 'religiously correct' to sacrifice humans (*On Piety*, frag. 13.15–20 [Pötscher]), but he adds also animals which by their work assist our lives (18.40–1) and offerings that belong to others, including the lives of animals (7.14–21). For him, however, it is 'religiously correct' to make 'pure' sacrifices, that is, the fruits of the earth (13.15–20 and 19.1–5), to sacrifice not many things but to honour (that is, to 'sacrifice to') the god frequently (10), and to sacrifice with a proper understanding of the nature of the gods (8.17–20).

Telling the truth about divinities

To describe the deities and their activities rightly is also 'religious correctness'. In his *Apology* (13), Xenophon has Socrates claim that omens are not really from birds and *manteis* but from the *daimonion*, and that 'he is speaking what is more true and "more religiously correct" (*ὁσιώτερα*) than those who attribute the power of the gods to birds'. Plato's Socrates in the *Republic* claims that god is good, and, being good, can be the cause only of good, never of evil.[11] To claim the opposite, whether in prose or poetry, would be to say things that are not 'religiously correct' or beneficial or self-consistent (2.380b5–c4).[12] Similarly Socrates views Achilles as the child of a goddess (hence a hero), second in descent from Zeus, very 'sound thinking', and raised by the very wise Chiron. Therefore it is 'religiously incorrect' to tell against him tales of how he spoke abusively and insolently to Apollo; was ready to fight a divine river; gave away his locks, which were the sacred property (*ἱερός*) of the river Spercheius, to the dead Patroclus; and of the dragging of Hector around the

[10] Cf. *Lg.* 4.716d6–717a3.

[11] On this argument, see pp. 196–7 and 214.

[12] In Pl. *Philebus* 28d5–e2, Protarchus makes into a religious crime (*οὐδ' ὅσιον*) the claim that an irrational and random power governs the whole universe.

tomb of Patroclus and of the slaughter of the captives at his pyre. These things are not true, and because they are said of a hero, a close descendant of Zeus, are not 'religiously correct'. So, too, it is 'religiously incorrect' to tell such tales of Theseus, son of Poseidon, and of Perithous, son of Zeus (3.391a4–e2). In short, it is 'religiously incorrect' and erroneous to claim that any hero would perform acts that were 'not respectful' (*ἀσεβῆ*). Similarly, in frag. 44 [Rose] = Plut. *Mor.* 115b–c, Aristotle has Silenus telling Minos that it is 'religiously incorrect' to tell lies about and blaspheme the dead who are, in fact, 'blessed and *eudaimones*'. On a slightly different note, the lawgiver of *Laws* 10.891a5–7 claims that for every man not to assist to the best of his ability the arguments in favour of the existence and true nature of the gods lacks both reason and 'religious correctness'.

Delightful and playful, but very much in a religious context, is Socrates' reaction to his first speech in the *Phaedrus*. There he had criticized the god Eros and argued that a boy should give his favours to the non-lover, not to the lover. As Socrates was about to leave after delivering this speech, his *daimonion* stopped him. He heard a voice 'which did not allow me to go away before I made myself "religiously correct" (*ἀφοσιώσωμαι*) since I have committed an error (*ἡμαρτηκότα*) against the divine'. Socrates recognizes that his 'error' was to make a simple-minded and slightly 'not respectful' (*ἀσεβῆ*) speech that claimed that Eros, a god, was evil. Socrates needed to 'purify himself' (*καθήρασθαι*) and gave his second speech, his palinode, praising Eros (242b8–243b7). We saw in Chapter 2 that in Plato's view telling false stories about the gods is blasphemy (as opposed to *εὐφημία*, 'good speech') and negatively affects the chances of success of sacrifices and prayers. Here he has Socrates consider it also 'religiously incorrect'. Socrates recognizes his error, corrects his 'religious incorrectness' by praising the god, that is, by using 'good speech' of him (265c1–3), and, that done, Socrates can ask the god for forgiveness and *charis*, that Eros, kindly and propitious, not take away Socrates' erotic 'craft' but make him even more honoured among the handsome boys (257a6–9). The charm of the erotic subject and setting distract us, but Plato has given the scene a background of conventional cult logic.

Sex and marriage

> One is to marry, within the ages of 30 to 35, realizing that there is a way in which the human race, by its nature, shares in immortality, for which every person by nature has every desire. The desire for immortality is to become famous and not to lie nameless in death. The race of humans is something attached by nature to all time, which through to the end attends and will attend it; being immortal by leaving behind grandchildren, always being the same and one, by reproduction it shares in immortality. To deprive oneself of this willingly is never 'religiously correct'.
>
> (The lawgiver in Plato, *Laws* 4.721b6–c7)

In both the *Republic* and the *Laws* Plato is concerned to restrict sexual activity outside his highly regulated, state-controlled marriage/eugenics programme, and he does this in part by innovatively making approved marriages 'sacred' (ἱεροί) and, therefore, any violations in this regard 'religiously incorrect'.[13] Much of this is captured in Socrates' dialogue with Glaucon in the *Republic*, 5.458d9–e4:

> SOCRATES: To have sex indiscriminately with one another or to do any other (such) thing is neither 'religiously correct' in the city of the *eudaimones* nor will the rulers allow it.
>
> GLAUCON: Yes, for it is not just.[14]
>
> SOCRATES: It is clear that next we will make the marriages sacred (ἱερούς) to the greatest extent we can. And the most beneficial marriages would be sacred.

These beneficial marriages are to be made sacred by sacrifices and prayers of the priests, priestesses, and whole community,[15] and one who at the wrong age participates in the marriage/procreation festivals commits an error (ἁμάρτημα) which is both unjust and 'religiously incorrect', the latter because the child produced will be born without the benefit of the sacrifices and prayers of the legitimate unions (5.461a3–b1).[16]

[13] Pl. *Lg.* 8.838d6–839c6. Actual Greek marriages were not, so far as we know, considered 'sacred'. On marriages in the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 116, 120–1, 425, and 439–40.

[14] Plato's lawgiver imagines that even monogamous birds and animals live '"religiously correctly" and justly' (*Lg.* 8.840d3–e2).

[15] In the Cretan city the *exegetai* determine for individuals the rituals appropriate for marriages that will be or are occurring or have occurred (*Lg.* 6.774e9–775a3). The nature of these rituals is not specified.

[16] Cf. *Lg.*8.841d3–4, ἄθυτα δὲ παλλακῶν σπέρματα καὶ νόθα.

Among other things, the fear that sexual activity outside marriage is in no way 'religiously correct' will have the power to control it (*Lg.* 8.840c6–9). The deviants are, thus, all 'religiously incorrect', but the law-abiding group, those restraining the deviants, is 'god-respecting' (θεοσεβές) and 'honour-loving' (φιλότιμον), and desires not bodies but the good ways of the soul (841c4–6). Although the law-abiders are 'god-respecting', Plato constructs most of this in terms of 'religious correctness' and not 'proper respect for the gods', probably because in his new societies he bases it upon laws and customs, not on the cult of the gods.[17] So, too, with incest, the grossest sexual perversion. It is subject to unwritten laws, and Xenophon's Socrates claims that these laws must be god-given.[18] Plato's lawgiver says it is easily prevented because everyone hears, from childhood on, in everyday life and in the tragedies, that these things are in no way 'religiously correct' but are god-hated and the most shameful of shameful deeds (838b7–d2).

On a related matter, Aristotle in the *Politics* (7.1335b22–6) foresees the need for abortions, and here the 'religiously correct' abortion is distinguished from the 'incorrect' one by whether the embryo has 'sensation' (αἴσθησις) and 'life'. Presumably he means that the embryo should be aborted before it has started using sense organs.[19]

Treatment of living parents

> And they were 'religiously correct' in their 'service' towards their parents.
>
> (Gorgias, in an encomium for the war dead, *VS* 82 B 6)

Among the acts of those who are 'religiously correct', according to Plato's lawgiver in *Laws* 4.717a2–d3, is the honouring of living

[17] In *Lg.* 8.841d6–7 the lawgiver speaks of legal wives who have come into the house 'with gods and sacred marriages'. These are presumably the gods whom the law-abiders 'respect'. Hera, traditionally a protector of Greek marriage, may have been among these. She has a cult in the Cretan city, and the lawgiver has her treasurer collect fines from men who would not marry or who paid excessive dowries (6.774a3–b4, d2–e3). On Hera in the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 439.

[18] Xen. *Mem.* 4.4.19–20. Cf. Pl. *Lg.* 8.838a9–b6.

[19] On this and for an explication of Aristotle's policy on abortion, see Kraut, 1997: 154–6.

parents.[20] In Chapter 1, in developing the analogy of humans to gods and children to parents, we surveyed the shared elements of 'service', *charis*, and honour, and here we turn to 'religious correctness' as it concerns children and parents.[21] Custom (*νόμος*) dictates honour and care for fathers and obedience to parents, and a child acting otherwise would be 'religiously incorrect' and 'it will not be better for him from gods or men' (*Rep.* 5.463c7–d6). Euthyphro thinks most people would consider it 'religiously incorrect' for a son to prosecute his father for murder, although such people, he claims, 'do not know how the divine stands concerning what is "religiously correct" and what is not' (*τὸ θεῖον ὡς ἔχει τοῦ ὁσίου πέρι καὶ τοῦ ἀνοσίου*) (*Euthphr.* 4d9–e3). In the *Crito* Plato has the Laws claim that it is 'not "religiously correct" to treat with force a mother or a father' (51c1–2). In *Laws* 9.880e6–881b2 such behaviour finds punishment in both this life and the next. And, of course, the slaying of a mother or father is a 'religiously incorrect' act of audacity.[22] Aristotle, too, makes 'disgraces, voluntary and involuntary killings, fights, and verbal abuse' of parents 'religiously incorrect' (*Pol.* 2.1262a25–8).[23]

The communal marriages Plato recommends in Book 5 of the *Republic* complicate the recognition of fathers and mothers, but Plato is concerned to maintain traditional elements of the parent/child relationship. His citizens are to name as their 'fathers' and 'mothers' those who participated in the mating festival at the time they were conceived. But names are not enough. Socrates (5.463c7–d6) asks:

> Will you establish by law for them family names only, or that they also do all the actions that are in accord with the names? That is, concerning fathers, what acts custom (*νόμος*) dictates concerning respect, care, and having to be obedient to parents, or otherwise it would not be better for the individual

[20] On the religious aspects of respect for parents in the *Laws*, see Reverdin, 1945: 195–9.

[21] For 'religious correctness' and, usually, not 'proper respect' in regard to parents, see pp. 37, 141 n. 2, and 170 n. 81.

[22] *Lg.* 9.881a7–8. Cf. *Lg.* 9.872d7–e9 and *Rep.* 10.615c7–d2. For the way in which a city 'makes itself religiously correct' after one of its citizens has killed his father, mother, brother, or child, see *Lg.* 9.873a4–c1.

[23] For the claim that Aristotle himself does not believe 'the holy [our "religiously correct"] (in the religious sense) is a legitimate moral concept' and that in this passage he is describing only 'reputable opinions', see Mayhew, 1996.

from gods and men since he would be doing things neither 'religiously correct' nor just if he should do things other than these.[24]

Miscellaneous

For Plato's Socrates suicide is 'religiously incorrect' because humans are the property of the gods and the gods would be angry if their property self-destructed without their orders (*Phd.* 62a5–c8). So, too, is it 'religiously incorrect' to speak of wishing a friend dead (*Euthd.* 283e4–6). Finally, we may conclude from Diogenes' argument to the contrary (frag. V B 132 [G] = D.L. 6.73) that Greeks considered cannibalism 'religiously incorrect'.[25]

'Religious correctness' in general

There is the inclination among scholars to see two aspects of ὁσιότης—which we have been translating as 'religious correctness'. The primary reference is to human behaviour and things concerning the gods and the sacred.[26] A secondary, less common reference, it is claimed, is to human behaviour and things in which the gods are not explicitly interested, and into this category are placed rites for the dead, oaths, murder, and the treatment of parents, *xenoi*, and peers.[27] The distinction has been recently reaffirmed by Kearns (*OCD*[3], p. 1301): 'ὅσιος tends to specialize into meaning that which is proper and lawful in regard to holy things, *or to conventional morality*' (emphasis mine). The question, in short, is whether ὁσιότης is always 'religious correctness' or may be found also as purely secular 'social

[24] Aristotle, in criticizing the communal marriages of Plato's *Republic*, claims it would be difficult, given this arrangement, to avoid 'disgraces (αἰκίας), voluntary and involuntary killings, battles, and verbal abuse, no one of which is "religiously correct" in regard to fathers and mothers' (*Pol.* 2.1262a25–8). See Saunders, 1995: 114.

[25] Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus also recommended the eating of the dead, even relatives, 'in critical circumstances'. See the evidence in Pearson, 1891, frags. 184 and 185 and pp. 212–13.

[26] As expressly stated by Polybius (22.10.8): τὰ πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους δίκαια καὶ τὰ πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς ὅσια. Cf. Eur. *Suppl.* 39–40, Antiphon 1.25 and 5.82, and Hyperides 6.22. See also Introduction, pp. 11–12.

[27] These are categories as formulated by Rudhardt, 1958: 30–6.

correctness'. We have seen in the philosophical sources ὅσιος and its cognates many times applied to actions of direct concern to the gods, such as stealing sacred property, sacrifice, and telling the truth about the deities. But it also applied to what might seem to us issues of 'conventional morality', such as sex and marriage and the treatment of living parents. Plato has, however, introduced for these a religious dimension, adding sacrifices and prayers to marriage and having the gods punish those who maltreat parents. For him, at least, the gods are explicitly interested in human behaviour in these areas, and so 'religious correctness', not just 'social correctness', is at issue. ὁσιότης maintains throughout its primary meaning.[28]

[28] 'Religious correctness' is, in fact, appropriate in all the passages that Rudhardt cites for his 'secondary' meaning of ὅσιος: Aesch. *Sept.* 1010, Soph. *Aj.* 1404–6, Eur. *Cyc.* 125, Dem. 23.68, Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.42, Din. 1.86, Antiph. 5.14 and 91, 6.2 and 10 and 48, and *Tetralogies* 1.2.2, 2.3.3, 3.2.2, Isoc. 14.2, Thuc. 3.56, and Pl. *Rep.* 5.463c–d, *Phd.* 114b–c, and *Lg.* 2.663b. All concern matters of sanctuaries, oaths, murder, family, *xenoi*, or supplication—all issues with which we have seen or will see the gods intimately concerned. New and noteworthy is Thuc. 3.56, that it is ὅσιον to repel an invader of one's country.

Although Adkins (1960: 132–8), discussing primarily tragedy and Herodotus, does not distinguish between εὐσεβής and ὅσιος, he properly notes that the gods were believed to uphold some moral relationships between men and that 'it seems difficult to deny that the fifth-century Greek, in using the words, had this aspect of the gods in mind' (133).

Dover (1974: 252–3), in a section entitled 'Extensions of Piety' where he argues that there was a 'convergence of social and political morality with religion' in the orators, sees instances where ὅσιος means simply 'legal' (Dem. 29.39) or 'procedurally correct' (Dem. 57.58, Ant. 5.8, Is. 9.34, Lyc. *Leoc.* 34), and where ἀνόσιος is used of dishonesty (Dem. 33.10), illegality (Aeschin. 3.91), ingratitude (Dem. 53.3), objectionable character (Aeschin. 1.95), political blackmail (Dem. 25.48), unpatriotic argument (Dem. 8.8), and has more general, but not obviously religious, moral, and political connotations (And. 1.19 and 23, Dem. 19.156). Dem. 57.58 and Aeschin. 3.91 are irrelevant, but for the others I have argued (1983: 138–9 n. 41) that most of Dover's examples can be explained in religious terms such as funeral rites and respect owed to parents, murder, maintenance of oaths, treason, and the religious behaviour of the defendant. The few remaining examples probably reflect casual use of ἀνόσιος and ἀσεβής as invective, upon each use of which we should not hang a theological conclusion. The orators' uses of ὅσιος and ἀνόσιος do not, therefore, by themselves justify the claim of an extension of 'religious correctness' to purely secular behaviour. Parker's claim (2005*a*: 362 n. 155) that 'the ideal of ὁσία [= ὁσιότης] bridges the ritual and moral spheres' is correct if taken to mean that ὁσία bridges the ritual and moral spheres *with which the gods were thought to be concerned.*

For the phrase ὅσια καὶ ἱερά meaning 'non-sacred and sacred', see Introduction, n. 39.

There are a few cases, as there are in the orators, where the religious aspects of ὅσιος are not clear. For both Plato and Aristotle truth is a matter of ὁσιότης. For Plato's lawgiver it is neither legal/conventional (νόμιμον) nor ὅσιον not to say what one thinks to be the truth (*Lg.* 9.861d2–4) and for Aristotle (*EN* 1.1096a14–17) it is a matter of ὁσιότης, especially for philosophers, to value truth over friends. In the funeral oration of the *Menexenus* (245d6–e2) to give up Greeks to non-Greeks (βαρβάροις), as happened in the Peace of Antalcidas in 387, is described as a 'shameful and ἀνόσιον deed'. In the *Laws* (11.914e3–4) a master may seize his slave and treat him however he wishes, so long as it is within the bounds of τὸ ὅσιον. We could offer special pleading for each of the above examples, for example, that by introducing the term ὅσιον Plato and Aristotle are metaphorically raising the telling of truth to the level of religious law, not reducing the conception of ὅσιον to the secular. So, too, of giving Greeks over to non-Greeks. But even if such special pleading is disallowed, the examples of ὅσιος as possibly 'social correctness' are rare compared to its dominant usage, in the philosophers, as 'religious correctness'.[29]

MATTERS MOSTLY OF 'PROPER RESPECT FOR THE GODS'

> Is not a human being the most 'god respecting' (θεοσεβέστατον) of all animals?
>
> (The Athenian lawgiver in Plato, *Laws* 10.902b5–6)

> Do you not see that the most long lasting and wise of human institutions, that is, city states and peoples, are the 'most god respecting' (θεοσεβέστατα) and that the wisest times of life are most concerned with gods?
>
> (Socrates to Aristodemus, in Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.4.16)

[29] For examples where there may well be a religious connotation but the context is unclear, see Pl. *Lg.* 9.874c7, and Arist. *EN* 9.1166b5–6 and *Pol.* 1.1253a34–7. On Pl. *Rep.* 2.368b7–c3 see p. 203.

How might one 'hit the target of "proper respect" (εὐσέβεια)', success in which brings rewards from the gods and good hopes in life to the individual? Plato's lawgiver raises and answers this question in *Laws* 4.717a3–718a6.[30] First one must pay honours (τιμὰς νέμων) to the Olympian gods and those gods who uphold the city (τοὺς τὴν πόλιν ἔχοντας),[31] secondly to the chthonic gods; after these gods, the sensible person (ἔμφρων) would perform the rituals (ὀργιάζοιτο)[32] for the *daimones*,[33] and, after them, for heroes. Next are the private sanctuaries (ἱδρύματα)[34] of ancestral gods (πατρῴων θεῶν), with rites performed all in accordance with the law.[35] After these come the honours of living parents, the nature of and reasons for which we surveyed in Chapter 1. To dead parents, last in the list, is owed a burial based on the 'soundest thinking' (σωφρονεστάτη ταφή) and annual care that brings them 'adornment'. 'If we do these things and live in this way each of us on each occasion would receive our deserved reward from the gods and those who are more powerful than us[36] and would spend most of our life in good hopes.' And the lawgiver prefaces this description with the claim that 'for those who are "religiously incorrect" (ἀνοσίοις), much labour concerning the gods is in vain, but for all those who are "religiously correct" that labour is most opportune' (717a2–3).[37]

[30] On this critical passage, see Morrow, 1960: 450–1, 464, and 467.

[31] For the Olympian gods and those gods who uphold the city being the same, see ibid. 435 n. 124.

[32] By the ὄργια of ὀργιάζοιτο we should understand sacrifices, processions, and dances (as listed in Plut. *Num.* 8.3). There is no suggestion (*pace* Morrow, ibid. 462–3) of mystery rites here.

[33] On Plato's idiosyncratic *daimones*, see pp. 22–7.

[34] ἱδρύματα are elsewhere almost always 'sanctuaries' or 'cult statues', and Plato's use of the participle ὀργιαζόμενα is puzzling, unless we assume he is being unusually elliptical here. Then the full expression would be 'to honour their sanctuaries and to celebrate the rites in them'. See England, 1921, on *Lg.* 4.717b3 and Morrow, 1960: 462.

[35] 'According to the law' reflects Plato's concern, discussed earlier, that private sanctuaries and rituals be largely eliminated. The sanctuaries here are, however, of 'ancestral gods', not of gods recently introduced on a whim.

[36] Presumably 'those more powerful' (οἱ κρείττονες) would include *daimones*, heroes, and living and dead parents. Morrow (1960: 465) would limit them to the dead.

[37] The lawgiver comes to this statement by a Platonic, not popular argument. The 'evil person' is impure in the soul, and, because he is impure, any ritual he would perform would be 'religiously incorrect' and therefore unsuccessful. On this argument, see p. 65 and Morrow, 1960: 400.

'Proper respect' thus encompasses gods, both Olympian and chthonic, Plato's *daimones*, heroes, and parents living and dead. It has two components, showing them honour and performing their rituals, and both must be done in ways that are 'religiously correct'. These are things a person of 'sound thoughts' would do. Finally, this 'proper respect' brings to the worshipper rewards and good hopes in this life. With this introduction we can begin to look in more detail at these and other areas of 'proper respect'.

Sacrifice

> Socrates thought the gods feel the most *charis* at honours from the people 'most properly respectful', and he praised this epic line,
> Sacrifice to the immortal gods to the best of your ability.[38]
>
> (Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.3.3)

To sacrifice wrongly was 'religiously incorrect', but not to sacrifice at all was not to 'show proper respect' (ἀσεβές) for the gods. As part of his argument that Socrates was 'properly respectful of the gods', indeed, 'most respectful of them' (*Mem.* 1.1.20), Xenophon claims that Socrates did, in fact, '"recognize the gods" whom the city "recognized"', and twice uses as his first proof of this that Socrates regularly sacrificed and participated in the sacrifices of the city (*Mem.* 1.1.2 and *Ap.* 11). The implication is that sacrificing shows 'proper respect for the gods'. So, too, 'good speech' (εὐφημία) at the sacrifice shows 'proper respect' (Pl. *Lg.* 7.821c6–d4). Theopompus' story of the Magnesian Clearchus illustrates, among other things, that 'proper respect' consists of zealously sacrificing at the proper times, both privately and in state festivals.[39] Xenophon has Socrates claim that a person who lacked a sense of *charis*, the mutual exchange of pleasing favours, could not sacrifice in a 'properly respectful way' (*Mem.* 2.2.13). There the failure of the sacrifice seems to depend on the individual's lack of a proper attitude and understanding of humans' relationship to the gods.

[38] Hesiod, *Op.* 336.
[39] Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.16, for which see pp. 62–4.

Oaths

> Socrates once served on the Boule and swore the bouleutic oath, in which there was a provision that he would serve in accordance with the laws. He was the presiding officer in the Ecclesia when the people were eager, contrary to the laws, to impose by a single vote the death penalty on all the nine generals with Thrasyllus and Erasinides.[40] Socrates was not willing to bring the vote even though the people were angry with him and many powerful people were threatening him. He thought it more important to keep his oath than to win the favour (χαρίσασθαι) of the people unjustly and to protect himself against those making threats. For he thought that gods are concerned with men, but not in the way the majority of people (οἱ πολλοί) think. For those think that the gods know some things but not others. But Socrates believed the gods know all things—things said, done, and even planned in silence—and that they are present everywhere, and that they give signs to humans about all human affairs.
>
> I wonder, then, how in the world Athenians were persuaded that Socrates was not 'sound thinking' (σωφρονεῖν) about the gods, a man who never said or did anything showing 'lack of respect' about gods, but rather said and did such things which a man would say and do who was and was thought to be the 'most properly respectful'.
>
> (Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.1.18–20)

At the close of his first speech in Plato's *Apology*, Socrates reminds the jurors of their oath and says that 'we must not make you accustomed to swearing falsely, nor must you become so accustomed, for neither of us would be "properly respectful" '. If Socrates persuaded or, by his pleading, compelled the jurors to violate their oath, he would be teaching them 'to believe that the gods do not exist', and, in his defence, would be charging against himself that he did not 'recognize the gods' (35c5–d6).[41] In the *Laws* (12.948b3–d1) the lawgiver claims

[40] On this trial of the nine generals for failing to collect the dead after the naval victory at Arginusae in 406 BCE, see Pl. *Ap.* 32a4–c2 and Xen. *Hell.* 1.6.24–7.35.

[41] Plato in the *Laws* elaborates on the deleterious effects of a perjurer in society. People should not have to associate with perjurers: 'For it would be a terrible thing, when many lawsuits have occurred in a city, to know that almost half (the litigants) have sworn falsely, and that these are people who are together without qualms in common messes, other associations, and private get-togethers' (12.948d8–e4).

that the contemporary prevalence of perjury is owed to three beliefs: some humans do not believe the gods exist,[42] some think the gods have no concern for us, but most believe the gods can be persuaded by small sacrifices and 'fawnings' to free us from punishments for perjury. The author of the *Rhetoric to Alexander* (1432a34–b4) adds and attempts to counter a fourth possibility, that perjurers believe it is possible to escape the notice of the gods when one gives false oaths in their names and thereby to escape punishment from them. The merchants who practise casual perjury in the marketplace take no thought of gods (*μηδὲν φροντίζῃ θεῶν*) (Pl. *Lg.* 11.916e6–917a2).[43] The lack of gods' concern for humans did not induce Epicurus to violate his oaths: he reportedly used oaths and 'guarded' them and urged his followers to 'guard oaths and invocations of the gods' (Philodemus, *On Piety* 820–40, 1451–61 [O]).[44] Diagoras of Melos first began to disbelieve in the existence of the gods when, we are told, he was wronged by someone who swore a false oath and then did not suffer because of it.[45] The linking of perjury, the violation of an oath in a god's name, with disbelief in the gods' existence and concern for men or attention to them, and with the belief that they can be bribed suggests why, in the philosophical tradition, perjury is treated as a matter of 'proper respect for the gods'.[46] Craftsmen are the sacred

The concern, in part, is that the perjurers will corrupt others: the individual who does not believe the gods exist and openly talks about 'sacrifices and oaths' and laughs at others must be imprisoned. If he were not, he would make others like himself (10.908c6–d1). *Xenoi*, however, will be allowed to give and receive oaths in legal proceedings because, unlike citizens, they will 'not grow old in the city' and, if they commit perjury, 'make others like themselves' (12.949b6–c3).

[42] Cf. *Lg.* 10.908c1–d1.

[43] Cf. *Lg.* 3.701c1–2.

[44] We know of no formal oath sworn by Epicurus, but he used and treated simple invocations of gods such as 'By Zeus' in his writings, and they generated much discussion by later commentators. See Obbink, 1996: 425–6, 522.

[45] Frag. T57 [WI] = Sext. Emp., *Math.* 9.53. See Versnel, 1981*a*: 40. Pythagoras, reportedly, bid his disciples 'to swear oaths rarely, but, having made use of them, in all ways to abide by them' (D.S. 10.9.1–2). The Stoics Cleanthes (*SVF* 1.581) and Chrysippus (2.197) attempted more precise definitions and descriptions of perjury, on which see Evans, 1974.

[46] Cf. Xenophanes, *VS* 21 A 14; Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.18–20; Pl. *Ap.* 35c5–d3 and *Lg.* 11.917a9–b4; and Arist. *Rh.* 1.1377a19–29. In Plato only one form of perjury was acceptable, violation of the lover's oath. In the always playful *Symposium* (183b5–c2), Plato has Pausanias claim that 'most people' assume the gods forgive lovers who falsely swear the *ἀφροδίσιον ὅρκον*. Cf. *Phlb.* 65c5–d2. It is also worth noting that Plato has the famously

property (ἱερόν) of Hephaestus and Athena as are soldiers of Ares and Athena, and if these two groups lie about their activities, they would not be 'respecting' (αἰδουμένους) their ancestors (11.920d7–921a5).[47] Keeping one's oath is primarily a matter of having 'proper respect' for the deities, especially in believing they exist, not of 'religious correctness'.[48] In addition, Aristotle (*Rh.* 1.1377a25–6) can recommend that a litigant defend his giving an oath by the claim that 'it is "properly respectful" to be willing to entrust the matter to the gods'.

Treatment of *xenoi* and suppliants

> In comparison to those of citizens, almost all the misdeeds (ἁμαρτήματα) of *xenoi* and against them are to be associated with an avenging god.[49] The *xenos*, being without comrades and kinsmen, is more pitied by men and gods. Therefore the one who can avenge him helps more eagerly, and the *daimon* and god of *xenoi*, following Zeus Xenios,[50] especially are able to help him. Therefore it is a matter of much caution (εὐλαβείας) for one who has even a little foresight to come to the end of his life having committed no misdeed concerning *xenoi*.[51] And of misdeeds against *xenoi* and native inhabitants, greatest is that concerning suppliants (ἱκέτας). The suppliant has reached a compact with the god, and that god becomes a special protector of the one who has suffered so that he who has suffered would not ever suffer unavenged.
>
> (The Lawgiver in Plato, *Laws* 5.729e3–730a9)

agnostic Protagoras make students reluctant to pay his full fees go into a sanctuary and 'swear' how much they think his lessons are worth and pay that (*Prt.* 328b6–c2).

[47] On this see Reverdin, 1945: 68.

[48] The distinctions here are predominant but not absolute. In the passage quoted above, Socrates claims that to persuade others to violate oaths is also not good (καλά), just, or 'religiously correct' (ὅσια) (*Ap.* 35c5–d1). In *Rep.* 2.363d5 'religious correctness' and keeping one's oath may be paired or may be separate items. In the orators, too, oaths are primarily a matter of 'proper respect for the gods': e.g. Isoc. 1.13, Dem. 9.16, 18.7, 23.96, 24.34, 57.17, and Lycurg., *Leoc.* 76. In 18.217 Demosthenes relates it to 'religious correctness' and in 48.52 makes perjury an injustice against the gods. We have seen above, n. 2, that Antiphon in the same speech (6) once calls perjurers 'most not respectful' (33) and once 'most religiously incorrect' (48).

[49] If a *xenos* is wronged in a border dispute, he has the protection of Zeus Xenios, and the lawbreaker is subject to two punishments, the 'first from the gods, the second under the law' (Pl. *Lg.* 8.842e6–843a8).

[50] On this expression, see Morrow, 1960: 458 n. 200.

[51] Cf. *Lg.* 9.879e1–6.

Plato puts foreigners (*xenoi*) living in or near his Cretan city[52] under the protection of Zeus Xenios and the *daimon* and god who attend Zeus Xenios. In receiving foreign men and women, in not periodically expelling them, and in sending out their own citizens as *xenoi* to other cities, Plato's citizens are 'honouring Zeus Xenios' (*Lg.* 12.953d8–e4). Crimes against *xenoi* and suppliants are a particular concern to the gods, and therefore they are described in terms of respect and fear of the gods involved, not of 'religious correctness'.[53]

True beliefs about the gods

> The individual who holds onto the belief that the gods can be bribed by gifts is, perhaps, the one who, of all those who are 'not respectful', most justly would be judged to be most evil and 'most not respectful' (κάκιστός τε εἶναι καὶ ἀσεβέστατος).
>
> (The Cretan Cleinias in Plato, *Laws* 10.907b1–4)

Plato is deeply concerned in the *Laws* to dispel three false beliefs about the gods: that they do not exist; that they have no concern for human affairs; or that they can be bribed with gifts. We have seen that to describe the deities and their activities rightly or wrongly is a question of 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης), but in the *Laws* actually to hold one of these beliefs (δόξαι), as Cleinias describes above, is 'lack of respect' (ἀσέβεια).[54] To not believe the gods exist is to be one

[52] On foreign residents in the city of the *Laws*, see Morrow, 1960: 144–8.

[53] For parallels to Plato's conception of suppliants and the protection of the gods in poetry, the orators, and historians, see Naiden, 2006: 122–9.

[54] For Plato's use of ἀσέβεια in this context, see Bolkestein, 1936: 200. One may perhaps see also a similar distinction between 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness' in the essay *On the Sacred Disease* by a Hippocratic author. He complains of individuals who claim that by practising magic and sacrificing they can bring down the moon, eclipse the sun, and create storms and good weather, rain, droughts, rough sea, and barren land. If this were so, none of these things would be divine but human, if the power of the divine can be overpowered and enslaved by a human's plans. For the author, such people talk much of 'the divine' and the '*daimonion*'. But they are not talking about 'proper respect', as they think they are, but rather about a 'lack of respect', that the gods do not exist, and their 'proper respect' and 'divine' show, in fact, a 'lack of respect' and 'religious incorrectness' (3.16–4.16). Here, as in the philosophical tradition, mistaken beliefs about the nature and activities of the gods and propagating those beliefs are indicative of a 'lack of respect' and 'religious incorrectness'.

of those who are not 'properly respectful' (10.886e6–887a8). So, too, those who erect private sanctuaries of the gods are among the 'not respectful', thinking that in secret they are making the gods propitious by their sacrifices and prayers (10.910a7–b3). Clever men, poets and others, argue that gods exist only by convention, not by nature, and as a result 'lack of respect' falls upon the young men who now think that 'the gods are not such as the law orders they must be thought of' (10.890a5–7). This 'lack of respect' resides in the soul that has been misled by false arguments, and as a result such people are in error about the real existence (τῆς ὄντως οὐσίας) of the gods (10.891e5–9). One can also be led into 'lack of respect' by observing the personal and public successes and honours of evil and unjust men and therefore coming to the conclusion that gods scorn human affairs and pay no attention to their activities (10.899d8–900b3). Plato's lawgiver advises a boy that his opinions will change over time, but for now he 'should not dare to show any "lack of respect" concerning the gods until he forms a clear, mature belief (δόγμα) about them' (10.888c7–d3). For the Stoics, the celestial bodies were gods or embodied the divine, and therefore Cleanthes could claim that Aristarchus of Samos should be charged with 'lack of respect' for 'moving the ἑστία of the cosmos', that is, for moving the earth from the centre of the universe (*SVF* 1.500 = Plutarch, *Mor.* 923a). So, too, Epicurus wrote of 'proper respect' concerning one's beliefs about the gods: 'It is not the one who does away with (ἀναιρῶν) the gods of the many who is "not respectful", but the one who attaches to the gods the beliefs of the many' (D.L. 10.123). In each instance 'lack of respect for the gods' results from false beliefs, however engendered.[55]

Introducing new gods

One might expect the introduction of new gods to be a matter of 'religious correctness', but it was in fact treated under the category of 'lack of respect' (ἀσέβεια). Two of the charges of the indictment

[55] Cf. Xenophanes' claim (*VS* 21 A 12 = Arist. *Rh.* 2.1399b6–9) that 'similarly those show a "lack of respect" who say the gods were born as do those who say they died', with Aristotle's comment, 'For in both ways it happens that the gods do not at some time exist.'

against Socrates form a pair, that he was introducing new deities (*daimonia*) and did not 'recognize the gods' whom the city 'recognized'.[56] For the second, the charge of 'lack of respect for the gods' is perfectly appropriate. For the first, 'introducing new deities', 'lack of respect' would be correct only if the promotion of new deities were thought to threaten the respect in which traditional deities were held.[57]

HONOURING THE GODS

> One need not examine every problem or proposition but the ones about which that person would be at a loss who needs discussion and not chastisement or sense-perception. Those who are at a loss whether or not it is necessary to honour the gods and to love (ἀγαπᾶν) their parents need chastisement. Those who are at a loss whether or not snow is white need sense-perception.
>
> (Aristotle, *Topics* 1.105a3–7)

'Proper respect' (εὐσέβεια) for the gods is demonstrated in the honouring of them.[58] 'Someone would most correctly hit the target of "proper respect" if he rendered honours' to the Olympian and city-supporting gods and to the chthonic deities (Pl. *Lg.* 4.717a6–b1). We have seen, since the first pages of this book, 'honouring the gods' linked with 'proper respect', prayers, sacrifices, festivals, dedications, and, more generally, with 'service to the gods'. It is now possible, with only brief summaries of this previous material, to treat 'honouring the gods', a major component of 'proper respect for the gods', on its own.

[56] For the sources for the wording of the indictment, see Ch. 3, n. 13.

[57] Phryne, too, was charged with 'lack of respect' for introducing a new god. See Ch. 3 n. 13. All this may be only a matter of Athenian legal terminology. The Athenians had a law against 'lack of respect', but not one against 'religious incorrectness'. Parker (2005*b*: 66) notes that 'there was no specific law against "introducing new gods", but to have introduced the wrong ones in the wrong circumstances might form an item in an indictment for impiety'.

[58] On honour in general and in a religious context, see Irwin, 1999: 334; Mikalson, 1991: 165–202; and Lloyd-Jones, 1987.

Honour and gifts betokening honour (γέρα) are, along with *charis*, what gods receive from humans (Pl. *Euthphr.* 15a6–11, proposition 7 in Ch. 1). For Epicurus the divine (τὸ δαιμόνιον) had no need of any honour, but it is our inborn nature (φυσικόν) to honour it, especially with 'religiously correct' assumptions about it but also with the practices handed down in the ancestral tradition (frag. 386 [Usener]). If one asks why honour should be considered a 'divine good', as Plato calls it (*Lg.* 5.727a3–4), or, otherwise put, why honour in particular is the appropriate return to the gods, one must turn to Aristotle's more general discussion of the nature of honour. It is, he says, the greatest of the 'external goods',[59] the one which we give to the gods, the prize for the finest things (*EN* 4.1123b17–21).[60] Honour is the gift (γέρας) for virtue and benefactions, and 'one who provides no good to the community is not held in honour, because a communal thing is given to the one who benefits the community, and honour is that communal thing' (*EN* 8.1163b3–8). 'All who have benefited their cities and peoples or had the ability to do so found honour' (*Pol.* 5.1310b34–6). And, finally, 'honour belongs by nature both to a ruler and to a god in relation to that which is ruled' (*EE* 7.1242b19–20). These comments of Aristotle on the honours of individuals and kings[61] suggest why the Greeks chose honour as the appropriate reward for the benefactions of their gods: it was the particular reward given, on the human level, to those who gave benefits to the community or had the power to do so.

Among the relatively few discussions of 'proper respect' in Socratic literature is the following belaboured conversation that Xenophon gives to Socrates and Euthydemus (*Mem.* 4.6.2–4):

SOCRATES: Tell me, Euthydemus, what kind of thing do you think 'proper respect' is?

EUTHYDEMUS: A very fine thing, by Zeus.

SOCRATES: Then can you tell me what kind of person 'the properly respectful one' (ὁ εὐσεβής) is?

[59] 'External goods' such as friends, wealth, political power, good birth, and good children are distinguished from the goods of the soul and the body. See *EN* 1.1098b12–14 and 1099a31–b3.

[60] Cf. *EE* 7.1242b19–20.

[61] On the analogy of kings to gods, based in large part on their similar τιμαί, see pp. 34–6.

EUTHYDEMUS: He seems to me to be the person honouring the gods.[62]
SOCRATES: Is it possible to honour the gods in whatever way one wishes?
EUTHYDEMUS: No, there are laws (*νόμοι*) in accordance with which it is necessary to honour the gods.
SOCRATES: Would not the one who knew these laws know how it is necessary to honour the gods?
EUTHYDEMUS: I think so.
SOCRATES: The one who knows how it is necessary to honour the gods does not think, does he, that it is necessary to do this in a way different from that he knows?
EUTHYDEMUS: No, he does not.
SOCRATES: Does anyone honour gods in a way different from the way in which he thinks he must honour them?
EUTHYDEMUS: I don't think so.
SOCRATES: Then would the one who knows the laws/conventions (*τὰ νόμιμα*) about the gods honour the gods in the legal/conventional way?[63]
EUTHYDEMUS: Certainly.
SOCRATES: Does not the one who honours them in the legal/conventional way honour them in the way it is necessary to honour them?
EUTHYDEMUS: Yes, for how would he not?
SOCRATES: And is the one honouring them in the way it is necessary 'properly respectful'?
EUTHYDEMUS: Certainly.
SOCRATES: Therefore the one knowing the laws/conventions about the gods might properly be defined by us as 'properly respectful'?
EUTHYDEMUS: That seems right to me.

Here 'proper respect' for the gods is not just to honour them but to do so in accord with existing laws/conventions. And we will not be surprised that in the Socratic tradition it is based primarily on 'knowledge'.[64]

[62] A fragment of Theodectes' defence of Socrates also illustrates this connection. Socrates had been charged with 'lack of respect', and Theodectes posed this question about Socrates: 'Whom of the gods whom the city "recognizes" has Socrates not honoured?' (Arist. *Rh.* 2.1399a8–10).

[63] By substituting *νόμιμα* for *νόμοι* Socrates seems to be expanding the discussion from 'laws' to both 'laws and conventions'.

[64] In two of the definitions reputedly culled from Plato's writings (*Def.* 412e14–413a2), 'proper respect' (*εὐσέβεια*) is defined in similar terms: 'it is the proper understanding (*ὑπόληψις ὀρθή*) about the honour of the gods', and 'it is knowledge (*ἐπιστήμη*) about the honour of the gods'.

The laws according to which one is 'to honour the gods' are, according to Xenophon's Socrates, those of the city: 'When someone asks the god in Delphi how he might acquire *charis* (χαρίζοιτο) with the gods, he answers, "By the law of the city". And it is the law everywhere to please (ἀρέσκεσθαι) gods according to one's means with sacrifices. How then might one better and more "properly respectfully" (εὐσεβέστερον) honour gods than by doing as the laws order?' In addition to following laws and conventions, one must do as much as one can: 'It is necessary not to fall short of one's means in any way because, when one does this, he is then obviously not honouring the gods. Therefore one must, leaving aside nothing, honour the gods according to one's means and be confident of and expect the greatest good things' (*Mem.* 4.3.16–17). According to Theophrastus (*On Piety*, frag. 7.6–8 [Pötscher]), 'to those who have created for us the greatest goods we must give the greatest returns from the most valuable things, especially if the gods are responsible for these things'. The author of the *Rhetoric to Alexander* considers it a reasonable claim that 'the gods are better intentioned to those who honour them more' (1423b16–18), but Aristotle makes the important point that 'it is not possible (to return equal value) in all matters, as, for example, in the honours towards the gods and parents. For no one might ever pay back their value, but the person serving gods and parents to the limit of his means seems to be good' (*EN* 8.1163b15–18). Finally, Theophrastus, using an analogy from human relations, offers another perspective on the appropriate 'attitude' in giving honours, here in the form of first-fruit offerings, to the gods (frag. 8.21–4):

> First-fruits should not be made as though it were some secondary affair, but with all eagerness. The honours ought to be like [those we give to humans] when we give them front-row seats [in the theatre and at games] for the good things [they have done for us], and when we move out of their way [when they pass], and when we offer them our seats. These honours ought not to be like payments of contractual obligations.

In the philosophical sources most discussion is of honouring the gods in general, but there are a couple of specific examples. For Plato's lawgiver, if an individual does not pay a craftsman his duly contracted wages, he dishonours Zeus Poliouchos and Athena (*Lg.* 11.921b7–c5). Similarly in the proper treatment of *xenoi* one

is honouring Zeus Xenios (12.953d8–e4).[65] For Plato's lawgiver, one who honours and respects (σεβόμενος) the group of family gods would reasonably have the birth gods kindly (εὐνους) towards his begetting of children (*Lg.* 5.729c5–8). And Aristotle allows adult males, but them alone, to honour 'on behalf of themselves, their children and wives' those gods whose cult featured obscenities and ridicule (*Pol.* 7.1336b14–23). Besides honouring gods themselves, one should also honour their sanctuaries, altars, and statues (Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.14 and Pl. *Lg.* 8.848c9–d5, 11.931a1–4). And, since in Platonic terms 'of all one's possessions his soul is, after the gods, most divine (θειότατον)', it must be honoured (5.726a2–727b4, 728a8–b2). Honour is due to parents as to gods (Aristotle, *EN* 9.1165a24), and this contributes to the analogy of child/parent to worshipper/god described in Chapter 1. But, as we have seen above, it would seem that, at least in the philosophical tradition, 'honouring parents' was more a matter of 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης), 'honouring gods' of 'proper respect' (εὐσέβεια).[66]

Humans honour gods because they exist and do or can help them in important ways. Conversely, the existence of the gods can be inferred from the honours they receive. Pericles reportedly had put it as follows in the fifth century: 'We do not see the gods themselves, but we infer their immortality from the honours they have and from the good things they provide us' (Plutarch, *Pericles* 8.6).[67] A century later the founder of Stoicism Zeno formulated somewhat the same idea in a syllogism: 'One might reasonably honour the gods. But one might not reasonably honour those who do not exist. Therefore the gods exist' (*SVF* 1.152 = Sext. Emp., *Math.* 9.133).[68]

[65] For the honour due to Eros, see Pl. *Smp.* 212b4–8.

[66] See pp. 37, 141 n. 2, and 170 n. 81.

[67] On this quotation and questions of its attribution, see Mikalson, 1991: 18 and 239 n. 7.

[68] Schofield, 1983: 38 calls this 'the most impressive of all Zeno's syllogisms'. On such syllogistic arguments, intended perhaps as proofs, in the Stoic context of 'proof', or 'to prod someone into philosophical reflection', see Schofield, 1983. On the logic and ancient attacks and defences of this particular syllogism, see Algra, 2003: 162–5; Obbink, 1992*a*: 214–15; and Dragona-Monachou, 1976: 41–50. One might imagine that, since cultic gods particularly receive honours, Zeno was referring to the gods of cult, but Cicero's extensive list (*SVF* 1.154, 161, 162, 165, and 167 = Cic.

Sacrifices, offerings, festivals, dances, and statues are common means of honouring the gods. Theophrastus, as we have seen, makes honour the first reason for sacrificing and making first-fruit offerings to the gods (*On Piety*, frag. 12.42–9 [Pötscher]). In many cases 'to honour the gods' is virtually synonymous with sacrificing or making offerings to them.[69] The gods are honoured, too, by festivals and by the dances in them.[70] But Theopompus' story of Clearchus of Methydrion (in Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.16) offers a broader scope for what it means to honour the gods, and we return to it as a fitting conclusion to the whole topic of 'honouring the gods'. This story is presented in the context of an argument against animal sacrifice, but, that aside, offers a description of religious activity at a level rarely accessible from our sources. When asked how he honoured the gods, Clearchus said that he 'performed the religious rites and zealously sacrificed at the proper times', 'garlanded and polished Hermes and Hecate and the rest of the sacred things which his ancestors had handed down to him and offered them incense, barley cakes, and round cakes', and 'participated in the state sacrifices and did not neglect any'. In response to the question of 'who honoured the divine best and most eagerly', the Pythia reportedly said that this Clearchus best of all men 'served' the gods. So we have a link between honouring the gods and 'serving' them, and we find the Pythia giving Apollo's endorsement to many of the philosophical claims we have encountered about honouring and 'serving' the gods, including the value of inexpensive offerings given in the right spirit, the need to worship traditional deities, the importance of performing rites zealously and at the proper times, the need to participate in all state as well as domestic cult, and, finally, the value of 'continual service' to the gods. All are, in Apollo's judgement, elements of how best to honour the gods.

Nat. D, 1.14.36) of what Zeno inconsistently in one work or another viewed as god or gods (law of nature, aether, a reason pervading all things, stars, years, months, and seasons) does not include cult deities. For additional entities termed 'god' by Zeno, see Dragona-Monachou, 1976: 38. Zeno interpreted the gods of Hesiod allegorically, for which see Algra, 2003: 169.

[69] e.g. Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.3; Theophrastus, *On Piety*, frags. 3.8–18, 7.4–20, 9.12–15, 13.40; and Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.16.

[70] Festivals: Pl. *Lg.* 7.809d1–7, Arist. *EN* 8.1160a23–8. Dances: Pl. *Phdr.* 259c6–d1 and *Lg.* 7.796b3–c4 and 815d5–6. Statues: Pl. *Phdr.* 252d5–e1.

STEALING SACRED PROPERTY, A MATTER OF BOTH 'RELIGIOUS CORRECTNESS' AND 'PROPER RESPECT'

'Stealing sacred things', that is 'stealing the property of the gods' (ἱεροσυλία), is treated by Plato as the worst of religious crimes.[71] His lawgiver in the *Laws* gives the usual priority to religious matters in presenting his laws on criminal behaviour. First is his law on 'lack of respect for the gods' (ἀσέβεια), and first in that category is his law concerning 'stealing sacred things'. Such acts are 'hard or impossible to cure', and the punishments are some of the harshest in the *Laws*. If the individual cannot be re-educated, he, like a traitor, is to be executed and his body cast out from the country.[72] Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle associated 'stealing sacred things' particularly with tyrants.[73] In the *Laws* Plato puts 'stealing sacred things' under his law concerning 'lack of respect', but the formal charge, 'stealing sacred property', is distinct.[74] For Aristotle such robbers are wicked, 'not respectful', and unjust (*EN* 4.1122a2–7). The tyrant who participates in such activities is also 'religiously incorrect' (Pl. *Rep.* 9.580a2–4) and such deeds are 'religiously incorrect' (9.854c7). Men may be led to such actions by 'madness, diseases, senility, or puerility' (*Lg.* 9.864d1–5). In 9.854b1–855a2 it is motivated not by some human or divine evil but by a 'sinful, maddening sting (οἶστρος ἀλιτηριώδης) that springs forth from old, unpurified, unjust acts', an impulse that can be cured only by rites of expulsion (ἀποδιοπομπήσεις), by the apotropaic gods, and by association with men said to be good.[75] Both the motivation, an inherited pollution,

[71] Cf. Pl. *Phd.* 113e1–6. On the proper meaning and translation of ἱεροσυλία, see p. 10.

[72] *Lg.* 9.853d5–855a2, 864d1–3, 857a1, 12.960b1–3. For the various punishments attested for those who steal sacred things, see Parker, 1983: 45 n. 47. In the *Laws* expulsion of the dead is the punishment also for traitors, conspirators against the constitution, and murderers of kinsmen (Morrow, 1960: 492 n. 277). On Plato's law against 'stealing sacred things', see also Reverdin, 1945: 232–5. On the law in Athens and in the *Laws*, see Cohen, 1983: 93–115 and 127–9.

[73] Xen. *Hier.* 4.ll; Pl. *Rep.* 1.344a7–b5, 8.568d6–7, 9.574d4–5; and Arist. *EN* 4.1122a2–7.

[74] Pl. *Lg.* 9.869b2–3. On this distinction, also in Attic law, see Morrow, 1960: 475.

[75] On this apparently inherited pollution, see England, 1921 on 9.854b2 ff.

and the apotropaic gods to cure it are unique in the *Laws* and reflect the unique seriousness of this crime. If, after all this, the citizen's disease does not abate, he should commit suicide. If he chooses not to, the state will see to it that he is executed and his body is cast beyond the boundaries of the city. For Euthyphro it is 'religiously correct' to prosecute those who 'steal sacred property', and 'religiously incorrect' not to do so (Pl. *Euthphr.* 5d8–e2).

It was perhaps the widespread recognition of 'stealing sacred things' as the worst religious crime that attracted the attention of the Cynics. Diogenes reportedly claimed that 'there is nothing "out of place" in taking something from a sanctuary' (frag. V B 353 [G] = D.L. 6.73),[76] and Bion of Borysthenes (frag. 33 [K] = Sen. *Ben.* 7.7.1–2) attacked from two sides:

> There is no such thing as sacrilege,[77] since whatever is stolen is only removed from one place belonging to the gods to another place belonging to the gods.
>
> Whoever has stolen or destroyed or turned to his own use what belongs to the gods is sacrilegious. All things belong to the gods. Therefore, whatever someone steals, he steals from the gods to whom all things belong. Therefore, whoever steals anything is sacrilegious.[78]

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN 'PROPER RESPECT' AND 'RELIGIOUS CORRECTNESS'

After the discussions in this and preceding chapters of the use, components, and general nature of the terms 'proper respect' (εὐσέβεια) and 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης) in their various forms and antonyms in the philosophical tradition, we are in a

[76] Cf. Diogenes' quip on the thieving treasurers of the gods (frag. V B 462 [G] = D.L. 6.45), quoted at the end of Ch. 2.

[77] 'Sacrilege' is a Latin, not Greek term, and appears here because the fragment is preserved, in Latin, by Seneca in *De Beneficiis* 7.7.1–2. The original would undoubtedly have been ἱεροσυλία.

[78] On this argument see Kindstrand, 1976: 239–40. For a similar view of ἱεροσυλία, see Theodorus of Cyrene, a contemporary of Socrates, in frag. 230 [Mannebach] = D.L. 2.99.

position to suggest some distinctions between the two components of 'service to the gods'. And here, too, we consider why Plato features 'religious correctness' and occasionally treats it but never 'proper respect for the gods' as a 'virtue'.

1. *'Proper respect' focuses directly on the gods themselves and raises questions of belief in their very existence and nature; 'religious correctness' concerns 'the sacred' (τὸ ἱερόν) and involves knowledge of and adherence to the traditions and conventions about 'the sacred'.*

The object of 'proper respect' is almost always a god or gods, and sacrifice comes to the fore as a primary means of showing that 'proper respect'. Not to sacrifice to them is an act of 'lack of respect' which indicates that one does not believe they exist. In taking an oath on a god's name, one directly involves the deity and, therefore, to violate that oath is an act of 'lack of respect' for the god, and this, for Plato, indicates that a person holds one of three mistaken beliefs about the gods: that they do not exist, or that they have no concern for human affairs, or that they can be bribed with gifts. And, more generally, personally to hold mistaken beliefs about the gods shows a 'lack of respect'.

To sacrifice to the gods, but in the wrong manner or with the wrong offerings, that is, in violation of conventions and traditions, is an act of 'religious incorrectness'. 'Religious correctness' requires a knowledge about sacrifice, about how it should be done; 'proper respect' dictates that it should be done. The offerings in sacrifice are 'the sacred' (τὰ ἱερά), and the wrong choice of them or circumstances of sacrificing them is 'religious incorrectness'. 'Sacred', too, are the gods' sanctuaries and other property, and other things such as parents and marriage may be put under the gods' protection and hence made 'sacred', and misdeeds regarding all of these are 'religiously incorrect'. In more general terms, 'religious correctness' shows an understanding of how to associate with the gods 'correctly' in all elements of 'service to the gods'.

In both 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness' laws, traditions, and conventions may be involved, but those related to 'proper respect' are those that require sacrifice to the gods; those involving 'religious correctness' are those describing how sacrifices are to be performed or, more generally, how one is to deal with 'the sacred'.

2. *'Proper respect' is a state of mind, a reasoned emotion, a feeling of honour for and obligation and gratitude to the gods within the* charis *relationship; 'religious correctness' is more a state of being, of being in conformance with religious traditions and conventions concerning 'the sacred'.*

'Proper respect' for the gods is demonstrated in the honour the human feels and shows towards the gods for the gifts he has received or hopes to receive. This honour, expressed by various means, is the human's contribution to the *charis* relationship with the god, to the mutual exchange of pleasing favours and gifts, a relationship that involves feelings of both obligation and gratitude. That one should show this 'proper respect' to the limit of one's abilities, continuously, with all eagerness, and zealously, further indicates its emotional character.

'Religious correctness' seems more to indicate a proper religious state, one that does not interfere with the success of acts of 'proper respect' such as sacrifice and prayer. Certain acts, such as maltreating parents, are themselves 'religiously incorrect' by the traditions of Greek society or at least are treated as such by Plato and Aristotle, and they put the perpetrator himself into the condition of 'religious incorrectness'. He may possibly still 'properly respect' the gods, but because of his errors he cannot successfully perform the actions of honour that establish or maintain the *charis* relationship with them. In this regard, 'religious incorrectness' may include, and is kindred to, pollution.

3. *'Proper respect' seems the more positive concept, indicating positive actions in the 'service to the gods'; 'religious correctness' is a neutral, passive state, in which an individual has not by his action fractured a relationship with the gods.*[79]

The person who has 'proper respect' for the gods sacrifices to them and shows them honour in a number of other ways, maintaining and enhancing his relationship with them. The person who is 'religiously correct' has not violated religious laws and traditions and therefore has not harmed his relationship with the gods. The one performs

[79] The positive character of 'proper respect' and the neutral or negative character of 'religious correctness' was suggested to me by Robert Parker. This formulation of this distinction is, however, mine.

positive actions, the other avoids negative actions. In 'proper respect' one should be 'eager' and 'zealous'; in 'religious correctness' one is to be 'on guard' and 'cautious'.

'Proper respect' for the gods and 'religious correctness' are the two components of 'service to the gods', and the distinctions we have made between them are offered in the abstract. The situation becomes more complex, and more interesting, when we look at how they are interrelated in particular circumstances and accounts of them. Some actions, for example, are termed sometimes 'properly respectful', sometimes 'religiously correct'. The 'stealing of sacred things' serves as the best example. It is termed one or the other, and that may depend on whether the speaker wishes to emphasize the wrong done to the god whose property is stolen or the violation of the law or convention concerning 'the sacred'. And, as we have seen, in Athenian law and in the law code of Plato's *Laws*, acts that are often termed 'religiously incorrect' are without explanation subsumed under the law concerning 'lack of respect'. Such is the case also with 'stealing sacred things'. An important question is whether in the philosophical tradition, apart from the context of law, 'religious correctness' is also occasionally subsumed, with or without explicit notice, under 'proper respect'. Does one find, for example, a statement such as '"Proper respect" is to sacrifice to the gods and to do so in the appropriate manner?' Here 'religious correctness'—in the phrase 'in the appropriate manner'—would be folded into 'proper respect'. I have found, however, no clear-cut instances of this,[80] and some possible cases can be explained in terms already discussed.[81]

[80] For a possible exception, see discussion of Pl. *Euthphr.* 14b2–7 below, n. 82.

[81] I offer two examples, one from Xenophon, one from Plato. In *Mem.* 4.6.2–4 Xenophon has Socrates and Euthydemus discuss at some length 'proper respect' and the need to honour the gods 'according to the laws/conventions'. This might seem to introduce the concept of 'religious correctness' in the phrase 'according to the laws/conventions', but, as we have seen, laws and conventions also dictated that sacrifices be made and sacrifices are a major way of honouring the gods, and so the whole discussion may involve the making of sacrifices, not *how* they are to be made. All then would be relevant to 'proper respect', not 'religious correctness'. In *Laws* 4.717a3–718a6 Plato has the lawgiver speak of 'proper respect' consisting of due honours to gods, *daimones*, heroes, and parents both living and dead. Usually proper honours to parents is a matter of 'religious correctness', but here parents are enveloped in a more general discussion of 'proper respect'. The explanation for the inclusion of parents under 'proper respect' here is probably the tendency, noted

One can claim, I think, that in the philosophical tradition, apart from the context of Athenian and Platonic law, 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness' are treated as separate aspects of religious behaviour, that is, of 'service to the gods', and that they maintain the distinctions suggested above.[82]

The question why Plato included in extended lists of virtues 'religious correctness' but not 'proper respect' was posed at the beginning of this chapter and was left unanswered. The question, so far as I know, has not been raised where one would expect it and where it properly belongs, that is, in scholarship on Plato's ethics, and that is the result, I think, of the incorrect assumption that 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect' are virtually the same and can both be translated simply as 'piety'. Given the lack of professional philosophical interest, I will attempt an answer. Both 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect' are matters of 'knowledge' and, as we

previously (Ch. 1, n. 20), of speaking of the 'proper respect' of parents only when they are paired with gods. Otherwise parents, treated alone, receive only honour and αἰδώς, a different form of 'respect', and 'proper respect' is reserved for the gods. But even in this passage the lawgiver introduces the discussion with the claim, supporting my distinctions, that 'the many efforts concerning gods (that is, acts of "proper respect") are in vain for those "religiously incorrect", but for all who are "religiously correct" they are most opportune' (717a2–3). The same explanation, that 'proper respect' may be used of parents and ancestors only when they are paired with gods, may also serve for Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.1.

[82] The most troublesome passage to fit into the distinctions I have suggested is Pl. *Euthphr.* 14b2–7, where Euthyphro claims (1) ἐὰν μὲν κεχαρισμένα τις ἐπίστηται τοῖς θεοῖς λέγειν τε καὶ πράττειν εὐχόμενός τε καὶ θύων, ταῦτ' ἔστι τὰ ὅσια, and (2) τὰ δ' ἐναντία τῶν κεχαρισμενῶν ἀσεβῆ. Claim (1) is free from objections, that is, the individual is praying and sacrificing and hence is 'properly respectful'. He knows how, when he sacrifices and prays, to say and do what establishes *charis* with the gods, and therefore his prayers and sacrifices are 'religiously correct'. Claim (2) causes the difficulties: 'the opposites of these things that establish *charis* are not 'properly respectful'. If this is taken to mean that he prays and sacrifices but says and does things that do not establish *charis* with the gods, I would expect 'these things' to be labelled 'religiously incorrect'. The solution I would tentatively offer is that τὰ δ' ἐναντία τῶν κεχαρισμενῶν refers in a summary way to both elements, prayer and sacrifice and saying and doing the correct things, both of which are necessary to have *charis* with the gods. The 'religiously correct' element is subsumed under 'proper respect'. Socrates in his response assumes prayer and sacrifice (the element of 'proper respect') and concentrates on the 'knowledge' of how to do them, and hence continues to speak of 'religious correctness'.

shall see in the next section, of 'sound thinking'. Both involve actions in respect to certain 'laws' or 'conventions'. What is perhaps critical to the discussion is that, in this philosophical tradition, the 'laws' for 'proper respect' are regularly attributed to Apollo of Delphi, that is, to the gods themselves, and as such are no more analysed or questioned than are Apollo's expected prescriptions for sanctuaries, sacrifices, and the like in the *Republic*. Aristotle, in fact, seemingly excludes 'the necessity to honour the gods' as a topic of philosophic discussion. Those who do not understand the need require 'chastisement', not discussion (*Topics* 1.105a3–7). 'Religious correctness', however, according to one common view is largely a matter of human law and convention, a view reported but not necessarily espoused by Socrates in this passage from the *Theaetetus* (172a–b6):

> Concerning civil matters, what each city thinks to be and establishes as laws/conventions (νόμιμα) for itself as beautiful and ugly, just and unjust, 'religiously correct' and not, these things are so in truth for each city, and each city believes that in these matters one individual is no wiser than another or one city wiser than another... In matters of justice and injustice, 'religious correctness' and 'religious incorrectness', they wish to assert strongly that neither of them has by nature (φύσει) its reality (οὐσίαν) but that which has seemed right to the group (κοινῇ) becomes true when it does seem right and for as much time as it seems right.[83]

As a *nomos* which may vary from one city, or from one culture, to the next, 'religious correctness' is more open, unlike the 'divine law' of 'proper respect', to the type of philosophical inquiry in which the Socratic tradition specializes. 'Religious correctness' requires definition, as in the *Euthyphro*, and it involves, as we have seen, a range of sometimes conflicting applications that cry out for systematization. It is also because it must be legislated by men, not simply attributed to a god, that it plays such a large role in the lawgiving of Plato's *Laws* in both theory and practice. This all may explain the greater interest in 'religious correctness' in the philosophical tradition.

[83] Cf. [Pl.] *Minos* 315b8–c2.

But the question remains why Plato sometimes treats 'religious correctness' but never 'proper respect' as a virtue. Plato himself offers no help here, but Aristotle might. Aristotle never speaks explicitly of 'proper respect' but does so of αἰδώς, which has several similarities to 'proper respect'.[84] *Αἰδώς*, Aristotle claims, is not a virtue (ἀρετή) because it is a 'feeling' or 'emotion' (πάθος) rather than a 'state of being' or 'state of character' (ἕξις).[85] It is a 'fear' of loss of reputation (*EN* 4.1128b10–12). If αἰδώς may be excluded as a virtue because it is a feeling (here, fear), so, too, can 'proper respect', which involves a 'feeling' of honour. 'Religious correctness', however, is, as we have argued, 'a state of being', or, perhaps better, 'a state of character', a ἕξις in Aristotle's terms, and that, like justice and bravery, can be treated as a virtue. It is, I think, because 'religious correctness' is a 'state of character' and 'proper respect' is a feeling or emotion that the former is a virtue, the latter not.[86] Some such reasoning, at least that 'proper respect' is an 'emotion', may have led Plato to exclude it as a virtue. And, I suspect, this is why, as we will see in the next chapter, Plato pairs 'just' and 'religiously correct', not 'just' and 'properly respectful' as descriptors of the moral individual. The one is a virtue; the other, however desirable, is not.

[84] I am indebted to my colleague Daniel Devereux for suggesting the analogy to αἰδώς. Cairns (1993) treats all aspects of αἰδώς, including its relationship to σέβας. Particularly relevant are his conclusions that (1) '*sebas* and *aidôs* overlap as responses to those of greater power and *timê*' (207); (2) '*aidôs*, like *sebas*, acknowledges the *timê* of others, but *sebas*, unlike *aidôs*, has no central reference to oneself, to one's own *timê*' (212); and (3) '*sebas*, therefore, is not simply fear of the powerful, but encompasses admiration of authority which one regards as legitimate' (207).

[85] On Aristotle's discussion of αἰδώς as an emotion (πάθος) and not a ἕξις, see Cairns, 1993: 393–401.

[86] That εὐσέβεια is a 'feeling' of honour or respect does not exclude cognitive elements. The 'feeling' of honour is generated from a cognitive process, which is especially clear in εὐσέβεια. The individual must reason out both what deserves his respect and what respect would be 'proper' in the situation. Hence both 'knowledge' and 'sound thinking' are involved. At the core remains, however, the feeling (πάθος) itself. On these various elements as related to αἰδώς and other emotions, see Cairns, 1993: 5–14.

THE CAUSE OF 'RELIGIOUS CORRECTNESS' AND 'PROPER RESPECT FOR THE GODS'

> The person with 'sound thoughts' (ὁ σώφρων) would do what is appropriate concerning both gods and humans... If he did the appropriate things concerning humans, he would be doing just things, and if he did the appropriate things concerning the gods, he would be doing 'religiously correct' things.
>
> (Socrates, in Plato, *Gorgias* 507a7–b2)

'Proper respect for the gods' and 'religious correctness', the two components of 'service to the gods', are the products of 'sound thinking' (σωφροσύνη).[87] 'Those with "sound thoughts"', Xenophon has Socrates say, '"serve" the gods for wet and dry crops, cattle, horses, sheep, and all their possessions' (*Oec.* 5.20). Socrates tried to make his companions 'sound thinking' about the gods (*Mem.* 4.3.2).[88] Xenophon himself is amazed that the Athenians were ever persuaded that Socrates did not 'have sound thoughts' about the gods, 'a man who never said or did anything showing a "lack of respect" (ἀσεβές) concerning the gods, but rather said and did those things that a man saying and doing would be and would be thought "most properly respectful" (εὐσεβέστατος)' (1.1.20). In the *Phaedrus* (273e4–8) Plato has Socrates claim that the person with 'sound thoughts' must pursue the art of speaking not for the sake of speaking and acting before men but so as to be able to say and do things, so far as he can, that establish *charis* with the gods. Prayer itself is a matter of 'sound thoughts'. Timaeus claims that 'those who have "sound thinking" in even a small degree will call upon god at the outset of a great or small activity' (Pl. *Ti.* 27c1–3).[89] And, in more general terms, we have seen that those who hold erroneous beliefs about the gods are subject to the charge of 'lack of respect'.

Those who lack 'sound thoughts' about gods and sacred matters must be educated, as by Socrates, or more harshly by the lawgiver in

[87] For ἔμφρων in this context, see Pl. *Lg.* 4.717b3. To 'not offend the gods' is the seventeenth of Rademaker's eighteen 'clusters of use' of σωφροσύνη (2005: 267–9), and he uses examples almost exclusively from tragedy.

[88] An explicit example of which may be seen in *Mem.* 4.3.17–18.

[89] Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 2.2.13–14.

Plato's *Laws*. The lawgiver will send those who think the gods can be bribed, but do so out of a lack of understanding (ἄνοια) without an evil impulse and character, to the *sophronisterion* for instruction for five years.[90] If, after that time, the individual seems to have 'sound thoughts', he may re-enter the community and live with those who do have 'sound thoughts'. If he does not attain this, he is to be executed (10.908e3–909a8). So, too, the slave or foreigner who steals sacred things, the worst of religious crimes, must be severely punished in the hope that, having been taught 'sound thinking', he may become better (9.854d1–5).

Conversely, the failure to respect the gods properly is 'madness'. Timaeus repeats the necessity to pray to the gods before his exposition, 'if we are not completely out of our wits' (εἰ μὴ παντάπασι παραλλάττομεν) (Pl. *Ti.* 27c4–d1). Xenophon reports that some madmen (τῶν μαινομένων) 'do not honour a sanctuary, altar, or anything else of the gods, others show respect for (σέβεσθαι) stones, chance pieces of wood, and wild animals' (*Mem.* 1.1.14). Plato's lawgiver puts into a group those who steal sacred things, traitors, and corrupters of the law for the destruction of the government—his three greatest criminal types[91]—and says that they must be motivated by madness, disease, great old age, or childishness (*Lg.* 9.864d1–5). All are deluded.

The almost sole emphasis on 'sound thinking' in regard to 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness' may follow from what Weiss (1994) has observed, that in Plato's early dialogues 'piety' or 'holiness' (with no distinction between 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness') is not placed, as the other virtues are, in the context of 'wisdom' and 'knowledge', both, for Plato, at a much higher epistemic level than 'sound thinking'. One might expect that it was only in a philosophical system that placed such heavy emphasis on rationality that the concept of 'lack of respect for the gods' as a lack of reason, of 'sound thinking', would have developed, but, in fact, it had been well established in tragedy in the previous century. I have discussed this extensively

[90] On the uniqueness of the word σωφρονιστήριον in classical Greek and its use in modern Greek for 'prison' or 'reformatory', see Reverdin, 1945: 223.

[91] For the association of traitors and those who steal sacred property see also Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.22.

in *Honor Thy Gods* and point here only to the examples of Creon in Sophocles' *Antigone* and Pentheus in Euripides' *Bacchae* whose religious errors are repeatedly attributed to 'bad thinking' (pp. 139–42, 147–52). This emphasis on the rationality (vs. emotionalism) behind the 'service to the gods' is a widespread Greek phenomenon, not particularly a philosophical one.

REWARDS FOR 'RELIGIOUS CORRECTNESS' AND 'PROPER RESPECT FOR THE GODS'

> I could much more show to you that those who believe the opposite to what I do are godless (ἀθέως) than they could show me godless, men who think chance events (τὰς τύχας) occur equally for the wicked and the good but that the 'things from the gods' (τὰ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν) are not better for the good and noble (τοῖς καλοῖς κἀγαθοῖς) when they are 'more properly respectful'.
>
> (Socrates in the Socratic dialogue *Alcibiades* by Plato's contemporary Aeschines of Sphettos, frag. VI A 50.46–50 [G][92])

At the end of Chapter 1 we surveyed the benefits that come to humans and are explicitly associated with 'service to the gods'. We here expand that list by including also those benefits associated with components of 'service to the gods', including prayer, sacrifice, 'religious correctness', and 'proper respect' for the gods. What humans pray and sacrifice for presumably reflects what they hope to receive in return from their proper religious behaviour, and we have seen that these include for them as individuals preservation of private households, health and strength of body, beauty, goodwill among friends, children, success in agriculture and animal husbandry, wealth, safety in war, honour in the city, political power, and, in terms of their city, preservation of its common affairs and victory in war.[93] There was

[92] On Aeschines and his *Alcibiades*, see Kahn, 1996: 18–23.

[93] Preservation of private households: Xen. *Oec.* 5.19–6.1, Pl. *Euthphr.* 14b2–7, *Lg.* 8.828a7–b3, 9.878a6–8; health and strength of body: Xen. *Oec.* 11.7–8 and Diod. 10.9.8; beauty: Diod. 10.9.8; goodwill among friends: Xen. *Oec.* 11.7–8; children: Pl. *Lg.* 5.729c5–8 and 9.878a6–8; success in agriculture and animal husbandry: Xen. *Oec.* 5.19–6.1; wealth: Xen. *Oec.* 11.7–8, *Mem.* 1.3.2, Diod. 10.9.8; safety in war

a widespread agreement among philosophers, beginning with Pythagoras, that one should not pray for specific goods but for 'good things' in general and thereby leave it to the gods to decide what those good things are. They include as examples of things mistakenly prayed for, however, only wealth, strength of body, beauty, and political power, all of which may ultimately result in good or evil. They chose not, apparently, to fault explicitly prayers for what would have been more widely considered always good, for example, preservation of the household and state, children,[94] and victory in war.

Divination is a major gift of the gods to humans, and the gods give it to those who 'serve' them, to those who are 'religiously correct' and 'properly respectful'.[95] The gods give signs to those to whom they are 'propitious' (Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.9). The outstanding and idiosyncratic example is, of course, Socrates and his *daimonion*. It came to him by 'divine apportionment' ([Pl.] *Thg.* 128d2–3) and because he was 'dear to' and honoured by the gods (Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.12 and *Ap.* 14). For his defenders it was one proof of his 'proper respect for the gods'. As we saw in Chapter 3, it was through divination that gods brought to men many of the rewards we have listed above for proper religious behaviour: success in building houses and cities, and in agriculture, marriage, and military expeditions. It could also assist in acquiring good health, wealth, and political power. Apollo even devised their laws for the Spartans. And, it was widely thought, divination could predict the future. In addition to these secular rewards, Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle have the gods, through divination, give guidance on religious matters, on how to fulfil religious responsibilities and be 'properly respectful', on how and where to found sanctuaries, altars, sacrifices, and festivals, on the proper burial and services to the dead and to ancestors, and on issues of murder trials and pollution.

and honour in the city: Xen. *Oec.* 11.7–8; political power: Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.2; preservation of common affairs of the city: Pl. *Euthphr.* 14b2–7, *Lg.* 8.828a7–b3 (cf. 4.717a6–7); victory in war: Xen. *Oec.* 5.19–6.1, Pl., *Lg.* 7.803e1–4 (cf. *La.* 195e8–196a3), [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.148e3–149c1.

[94] For the Cynic Bion's quip on the futility of prayer to Zeus for εὐτεκνία (frag. 29 [K]), see Ch. 2 n. 12.

[95] Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.18, *Oec.* 5.19–6.1, and *Smp.* 4.48–9. The reverse can also be argued: because gods give us divination, we should 'serve' them (Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.15–18).

By offering advice on religious matters to those who are already 'properly respectful' and 'dear' to the gods, the gods introduce a multiplying effect, making those already 'properly respectful' and 'religiously correct' even more so.

CHARIS

We have thus far listed the specific rewards that might come from 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness', but these rewards were the product of having good relationships with the gods, and these relationships in turn also depended on 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness'. We now turn to how these relationships were described in the philosophical tradition. First and foremost is *charis*. We described that relationship in Chapter 1, in relation to 'service to the gods', and can summarize those results here. A *charis* was a favour that brought to the recipient delight and pleasure, and there was the expectation that such a favour rendered required a return favour bringing delight and pleasure. Two who had exchanged such *charites*, whether human and human or human and god, were in a *charis* relationship, and there was the expectation of continued exchange of favours.[96] For the 'favours' humans received from the gods, most of them listed above,[97] humans in return gave primarily sacrifice and prayer,[98] and done properly, these are elements of 'religious correctness' (Pl. *Euthphr.* 14b2–4). According to Xenophon's Socrates, Delphic Apollo himself bid humans to establish *charis* (*χαρίζοιτο*) with the gods by following the 'law' (*νόμος*) of the city, and 'that law everywhere is to please the gods to the best of one's ability by offerings (*ἱεροῖς*)' (*Mem.* 4.3.16).[99] Plato's lawgiver intends to maintain the

[96] For the denial of such a *charis* relationship with the gods in the Epicurean tradition, see Ch. 2 n. 6.

[97] In *Euthphr.* 15a3–4 Plato has Socrates say, 'We receive all the good things from [the gods].'

[98] Stilpon of Megara (late fourth century BCE) may have doubted that gods found *charis* in prayer. When asked by Crates if the gods found *charis* (*χαίρουσι*) in 'falling to one's knees (*προσκυνήσεσιν*) and prayers', he bid Crates 'not to ask about these things in the street but in private' (frag. II O 6 [G] = D.L. 2.117).

[99] Cf. Theophrastus, *On Piety*, frag. 12.42–8 [Pötscher].

charis of the god by letting him select, through allotment, his own priests (*Lg.* 6.759b7–c6) and, as we saw above, Socrates in the *Phaedrus* claims that one must study the art of speaking so that he can say and do things that establish *charis* with the gods (273e4–8). In addition to offerings and prayers, festivals (*Lg.* 6.771d3–6), appropriate dances (7.796c2–4), and dedicated statues (11.931a1–4) also establish *charis* with the gods. One certainly feels 'gratitude' for receiving such favours,[100] but that is not the only factor. Equally or more important is the expectation to repay the favour or to receive a favour in return. A person who lacks a sense of *charis* lacks an attribute fundamental to the proper relationship with the gods. Xenophon's Socrates describes at length society's abhorrence and punishment of an individual who fails to show *charis* to his parents for the good things he has received from them, but concludes his discussion with the claim that the gods will not be willing to do good for such a person because he lacks *charis* (ἀχάριστος) (*Mem.* 2.2.13–14). *Charis*, and the honour we have already discussed in this chapter are the two most important and characteristically Greek elements in a human's relationship with the gods.[101]

Philosophical criticisms and reforms directed expressly to the *charis* relationship in part concern, as we saw in Chapter 2, sacrifices. In the view of Xenophon's Socrates, Pythian Apollo through his Oracle ordered sacrifice in accordance with the law of the city (*Mem.* 4.3.16), but the same Apollo told Pythagoras, reputedly meeting directly with him a hundred years earlier, that the gods felt *charis* not in animal sacrifice but in bloodless offerings such as honey-cakes, incense, and hymns (Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, 1.1). For Xenophon's Socrates, what was important was not the expense of the offerings, but that they were made by good people (τῶν χρηστῶν), by those who were 'most properly respectful' (*Mem.* 1.3.3).[102] Aristotle offers an interesting remodelling or expansion of the *charis* relationship

[100] On the rare explicit statements in Greek for expressing one-sided, non-mutual gratitude towards the gods, but also on dedications, prayers, and hymns as the means by which Greeks expressed gratitude, see Bremer, 1998 and Versnel, 1981*a*: 42–62.

[101] For the pairing of *charis* and honour for a god, contrasted to 'lack of respect' for him, see Pl. *Smp.* 188c2–4.

[102] Xenophon also has Socrates argue that one did not establish *charis* (χαρίζεσθαι) with the gods by investigating, like Anaxagoras, astronomy, the secrets of the divine workings of the heavens that the gods did not wish to reveal (*Mem.* 4.7.6).

with the gods in this explanation of the special relationship of 'the wise man' (ὁ σοφός) to the gods (*EN* 10.1179a23–32):

The person whose activity is according to reason (κατὰ νοῦν) and 'serves' this best seems in the best state and 'most dear to the gods' (θεοφιλέστατος). If the gods give any attention (ἐπιμέλεια) to human affairs,[103] and it seems they do, it would be logical that they feel *charis* (χαίρειν) for that which is best and most kindred to them, namely reason, and that they do good in return to those who especially value and honour reason. They would do so on the assumption that the wise are attentive to what is 'dear' to the gods and act properly and in a good way. It is clear that all these (circumstances) exist especially for the wise man. Therefore he is 'most dear to the gods',[104] and it is probable that the same man is most *eudaimon*. So, in this way, the wise man would be especially *eudaimon*.

It is not surprising that a philosopher might redirect the *charis* relationship from 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness' to wisdom (σοφία).[105] Such, though, may not have been Aristotle's intent. He may rather be using the language of conventional religion to express metaphorically the very special relationship of wise men to the gods as he conceived of them.[106]

'DEARNESS' TO THE GODS

In the above passage Aristotle has the wise man 'most dear' to the gods and gives reasons for this, and we now turn to 'dearness' to god as a reward for proper religious behaviour.[107] Both Plato in the *Lysis*

[103] According to Broadie, 2003: 61 n. 22, 'the subsequent argument shows that the truth of this antecedent is assumed'. On this passage see also Verdenius, 1960: 60.

[104] Cf. Diogenes in D.L. 6.37 and 72. On these passages see Konstan, 1997: 169.

[105] In a similar way in *EE* 8.1249b16–21 Aristotle associates 'serving' (θεραπεύειν) god not with 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness' but with 'contemplating' (θεωρεῖν) god. On the Platonic background of this, see Dirlmeier, 1984: 503–4.

[106] For full discussion of this passage in terms of Aristotelian *eudaimonia* and the argument of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, see Broadie, 2003: 60–9. For Broadie the return to such humans from the gods is 'bursts of understanding'. 'This is the reward to the human thinker for intellection engaged in just for its own sake' (64–5). See also Dirlmeier, 1991: 597–9.

[107] On my translations 'dear' for φίλος and 'affection' and 'mutual affection' for φιλία, see p. 15. On φιλία between gods and men, see Parker, 1998: 122–5 and Yunis,

and Aristotle in the *Eudemian* and *Nicomachean Ethics* pondered who, in a friendship, is 'dear' to whom and in what circumstances friendship can exist. Aristotle introduces relations with the gods as examples into these discussions, and for him a decisive factor is the difference in status of the two parties, of the human and the god. First of all, those of the lower status, humans, should not expect to be 'dear' (*φίλοι*) to those of much higher status, that is, gods:

> It is clear if there is a great difference (*διάστημα*) in virtue or vice, or in resources, or something else. For they do not have 'mutual affection' (*φιλία*) nor do they even expect to. This is clearest in the case of the gods because they excel most in all the good things, and it is also clear in the case of kings because the much lower classes do not expect to be 'dear' to them. (*EN* 8.1158b33–1159a2)

> With many things removed, 'mutual affection' (*φιλία*) still remains, but not if one is greatly separated (from the other), as in the case of the god. From this arises a difficulty: friends do not wish for their friends the greatest of good things, which is to become gods. For there will no longer be those to share 'mutual affection' with them.[108] (*EN* 8.1159a4–8)

The author of the *Magna Moralia*[109] categorically denies the possibility of humans' 'mutual affection' (*φιλία*) with a god: 'We say that "mutual affection" exists where there exists a return of affection (*τὸ ἀντιφιλεῖσθαι*), but affection towards a god does not admit return affection or affection (*φιλεῖν*) in general. It would be strange if someone said "he had affection (*φιλεῖν*) for Zeus" ' (2.1208b27–32). Aristotle's comments in the *Eudemian Ethics* (7.1238b26–30), however, suggest that he allowed the possibility of mutual affection between humans and gods, but that each party may have a different kind of affection:

1988*a*: 107–11. On the concept in Plato, see Verdenius, 1952: 256–60. See Dirlmeier, 1970 for treatment of this concept from Homer and his Near Eastern and Egyptian antecedents through the whole of the philosophical and literary tradition down to its use by Christians in the seventh century CE. There is no explicit sense of 'mutual affection' in the 'goodwill' (*εὔνοια*) that Plato's lawgiver has gods feel towards men for their honour, 'respect', and the dedications they receive in *Lg.* 5.729c5–8 and 11.931a1–4.

[108] For a full statement of this argument, see Irwin, 1999: 280.

[109] On problems with the Aristotelian authorship of this, see Bobonich, 2006: 15–16.

It is ridiculous if someone charges against a god that he does not return affection (ἀντιφιλεῖ) in the same manner in which he receives it (φιλεῖται), or if the one ruled charges this against the one ruling. For to receive affection (φιλεῖσθαι), not to give it (φιλεῖν), is characteristic of the ruler, or *else to give it in another way.*[110]

The affection of the inferior to the superior is like that of children to parents or humans to god: 'There is for children affection (φιλία) towards parents and for humans towards gods, as towards what is good and superior. For (parents and gods) have done well the most important things (for them)' (*EN* 8.1162a4–6). The 'other way' in which superiors may give affection to inferiors, if they give it at all, may be as follows: 'The affection (φιλία) of a father and son is the same as that of a god towards a human, of the one who had done good towards someone who has received it, and, in general, of the one ruling by nature towards the one ruled by nature' (*EE* 7.1242a32–5).

Aristotle's comments, however inconsistent, are somewhat helpful in sorting out one way in which a person might be 'dear to the gods', but we need not be bound by them.[111] Nor was, apparently, Aristotle himself, who had the wise man 'dear to god' for quite different reasons in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (10.1179a23–32), reasons we will explore later. It is noteworthy, however, that throughout the philosophical tradition humans' proper attitude towards gods is regularly 'respect' (σέβας and cognates) and honour, not the 'affection' embodied in φιλία.[112] The 'affection' almost always flows from god to humans, not

[110] Cf. Arist. *EE* 7.1239a17–19.

[111] For the contradictions among (1) *EE* 7.1238b26–30, 7.1242a32–5 and *EN* 8.1162a4–6, 10.1179a23–32 and (2) *EN* 8.1158b33–1159a2, 1159a4–8, *MM* 2.1208b27–32 and other Aristotelian statements of his conception of god, see Dirlmeier, 1970: 85–7. To establish consistency, Dirlmeier here rejects the first group as non-Aristotelian. Dirlmeier later, in 1984 and 1991, sought other means to reconcile passages. See his discussions of relevant passages. On these and on the Aristotelian concepts of 'dearness to god', see also Babut, 1974: 122–4. Parker, 1998: 122–4, in examining some of these texts ignores the exception in *EE* 7.1238b26–30 and the whole of *EN* 10.1179a23–32, and thus can come to the conclusion that 'according to Aristotle . . . human may perhaps love god (even though this is doubtful), but god certainly cannot love human in return'. Even Epicurus, whose gods are no less remote from humans than Aristotle's god of contemplation, can assert that 'the wise are "friends" of the gods, and gods are "friends" of the wise' (frag. 386 [Usener]).

[112] Prayers to 'dear gods', 'dear god', or e.g. 'dear Zeus' are not uncommon in the poetic tradition, but in philosophy the single example is Pl. *Phdr.* 279b8 in Socrates' prayer to Pan. See the collection of such prayers in Parker, 1998: 125. Parker here

from humans to gods.[113] And in this tradition, especially in the Socratic literature, a god's or the gods' affection (φιλία) for a human being is treated as a major reward for 'service to the gods' and a virtuous life.

Xenophon offers a good introduction to the more practical aspects of 'dearness' to god in the conversation he gives to Hermogenes and Socrates in his *Symposium*, 4.48–9:

> HERMOGENES: I am so 'dear' to the gods that, because of their attention to me (τὸ ἐπιμελεῖσθαι μοι), I am never unnoticed by them night or day, wherever I start off to or whatever I am going to do. And because of their foreknowledge they give me signs of what is going to result from each (situation) by sending as messengers oracles, dreams, and omens as to what I should and should not do. When I obey these, I never regret it. Once I distrusted them and was punished.
>
> SOCRATES: How do you 'serve' (θεραπεύων) them to have them so 'dear' towards you?
>
> HERMOGENES: By Zeus, very inexpensively! I praise them, spending no money, and I give back to them some of what they give me, and I maintain good speech (εὐφημῶ) so far as I can, and I willingly commit no deception in matters in which I make them witnesses.
>
> SOCRATES: By Zeus, if then by being such a person you have them so 'dear' towards you, the gods, too, it seems, take pleasure in moral goodness (καλοκαγαθίᾳ).

Hermogenes wins the gods' affection by 'serving' them, in praises (probably hymns), first-fruit offerings, non-blasphemous speech, and by maintaining oaths in their names.[114] Hermogenes thinks that, as a result, the gods are attentive to him[115] and in particular give him signs through divination.[116] Socrates, interestingly, turns all

notes that 'informal prayer is the context in which the god–man relationship moves closest (partly no doubt for persuasive reasons) to intimacy'. I agree with his conclusion (p. 124) that such prayers do 'not refute the claim that "it would be odd for anyone to say that he loves Zeus"'.

[113] Parker (1998: 123) claims that 'it is also the case that "dear to the gods" (θεοφιλής) is a standard Greek word and concept, "god-loving" (φιλόθεος) does not appear until the fourth century BC and is never important'.

[114] For oaths see also Pl. *Lg.* 11.916e6–917a2.

[115] For the implication that, because a prayer was answered, the god is a φίλος of the one who prayed, see Pl. *Phlb.* 25b5–12.

[116] Aristotle raises the interesting question of the relationship of 'good luck' to 'dearness to god' in the *Eudemian Ethics* (8.1247a22–31). Some say, he claims, that

this in the direction of moral goodness. Plato has Glaucon in the *Republic* make the perverse argument that the unjust (and rich) man by making grand sacrifices and dedications and so 'serving the gods' will be 'more dear' (*θεοφιλέστερον*) to them than the just man (2.362c1–6). The argument may be a straw one, but we can nonetheless add sacrifices, prayers, and dedications to the list of what makes humans 'dear' to the gods.[117] So, too, does the proper treatment of parents and grandparents (*Lg.* 11.931e4–6), an issue of major importance in the *Laws* where divine 'hatred' or 'wrath' is threatened for the one who physically abuses his parents or does not prosecute their killers (9.871b1–4, 879c2–3, and 880e6–881a3). In the elevated rhetoric of a funeral oration (*Menexenus* 246d5–7) Plato has soldiers who died in combat assert to their children that an individual who, unlike them, brings shame upon his ancestors finds no man or god who feels affection (*φίλος*) for him when he is alive or dead. Incest, too, is god-hated (*Lg.* 8.838a9–b11).

As we have seen, the praises, sacrifices, offerings, maintenance of oaths, and 'good speech' that Hermocrates describes are all linked with 'proper respect' (*εὐσέβεια*) for the gods, but the term 'proper respect' itself is less common in the context of 'affection' of the gods than one might expect. Once, but only once, is it expressly said that a 'properly respectful' person, who is also just and good, would be 'dear to the gods' (Pl. *Phlb.* 39e10–12).[118] Proper behaviour towards

individuals lucky in, for example, dice games are 'dear to a god' (*φιλεῖσθαι ὑπὸ θεοῦ*). In seafaring the lucky person has, as it were, the *daimon* as his pilot. But to Aristotle it is strange (*ἄτοπον*) that a god or *daimon* has 'affection' (*φιλεῖν*) for such a person, but not for the one who is 'best and most thoughtful' (*φρονιμώτατον*). Aristotle concludes that the lucky person is such just by his inborn nature (*φύσις*), not by divine intervention. Hence 'dearness' to god is not a factor. On this passage see Dirlmeier, 1984: 482–3.

[117] In Pl. *Phdr.* 259c6–d1 dances honouring Terpsichore make the dancers 'more dear' to her.

[118] The physician Eryximachus in Plato's *Symposium* (188b6–d9) creatively puts into the context of 'proper respect' and *θεοφιλία* the conclusion of his encomium of 'good' Eros. All 'lack of respect' concerning living and dead parents and the gods occurs if someone does not establish *charis* (*χαρίζηται*) with and honour the 'orderly' Eros. Divination oversees these matters and is the creator of 'mutual affection' between humans and gods because it knows which human erotic affairs incline to right (*θέμις*) and 'proper respect'. Orderly Eros creates all *eudaimonia* for us and makes us able to associate with and be 'dear' to one another and to the gods who are more powerful than we. In the conclusion of his speech in the *Symposium*

parents is more a matter of 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης), and we find in the *Euthyphro* the fullest discussion of 'dearness to god' in Socrates' and Euthyphro's examination of what 'religious correctness' is in this context. The whole dialogue is never brought to a satisfactory conclusion, but the question of the relationship of 'religious correctness' to 'dearness to god' is, if we take an agreement between Socrates and his interlocutor to be a 'satisfactory conclusion'. The fundamental question is this: is what is 'religiously correct' 'dear to the gods' because it is 'religiously correct', or is it 'religiously correct' because it is 'dear to the gods' (10a2–3)? Socrates and Euthyphro eventually agree that what is 'religiously correct' is 'dear to the gods' because it is 'religiously correct', not because it is 'dear to the gods' (10e2–4), and the argument allows us also to conclude that a person is 'dear to the gods' if he is 'religiously correct' (ὅσιος). If these conclusions have any practical application, it would seem that one must practise what is established to be 'religiously correct' by law and traditions, and then one may become 'dear to the gods'. One may, thus, pay less attention to what is 'dear to the gods', a question that, if divorced from divination and cult practice, can lead into the unsatisfactory ruminations based on myth and poetry detailed in 7b2–9e9.

In the philosophical tradition the ultimate 'human good' is *eudaimonia*, a state of being defined by the philosophers themselves as 'to live well', 'to fare well', or, otherwise put, 'to have all the good things (τὰ ἀγαθά)'.[119] It may be seen as the ultimate reward from 'proper respect for the gods', 'religious correctness', the desirable *charis* and 'friendship' relationship with the gods, and, importantly, moral goodness. In the Socratic tradition *eudaimonia* is the product of not one or two of these elements, but of all of them together. In this chapter we have examined behaviours that are and are not 'religiously correct' and 'properly respectful of the gods' as well as their causes. We divided the rewards from such behaviours into two

Aristophanes also links, regarding Eros, 'proper respect' towards the gods with the eventual *eudaimonia* of the devotees (193c8–d5). In *Cratylus* 394e1–5 Socrates claims that one should not name a person who 'lacks respect' (ἀσεβής) Theophilus. On such human names including elements of 'god' and 'dear' and their changing fashions over the years, see Dirlmeier, 1970: 108–9 and Parker, 2000: 79.

[119] See pp. 7–9.

groups: the more specific ones such as preservation of households and cities, success in agriculture and divination, and so forth; and, more generally, the 'good' relationship with the gods through *charis* and by becoming 'dear to the gods'. We turn in the next chapter to moral goodness, one of the essential elements for achieving *eudaimonia* in the philosophical tradition, and we examine how the philosophers related moral goodness to the more obviously religious elements of 'religious correctness', 'proper respect for the gods', *charis*, and 'dearness to the gods'.

5

‘Religious Correctness’ and Justice

> Is not the just, ‘properly respectful’, and good man ‘dear’ to the gods?
>
> (Socrates, in Plato, *Philebus* 39e10–11)

We have examined many facets of ‘religious correctness’ (ὁσιότης) in previous chapters, primarily in a cultic context. Here we turn to its place in the larger moral system, particularly its relationship to ‘sound thinking’ (σωφροσύνη) and justice. As we have seen at the end of Chapter 4, ‘religious correctness’ may make a person ‘dear to the gods’, but in this philosophical tradition moral virtues may also contribute to this same result. In Xenophon’s *Symposium* 4.48–9, Socrates concludes a discussion of what cultic acts make humans ‘dear to the gods’ with the comment, ‘The gods, it seems, take pleasure in moral goodness’, and throughout the Socratic tradition there is a strong link between moral goodness in general, and ‘sound thinking’ and justice in particular, with winning the affection of the gods. In his *Symposium* (212a5–7) Plato has Socrates claim that the person who has ‘begotten and nourished true virtue’ (ἀρετὴν ἀληθῆ) is able to become ‘dear to the gods’ (θεοφιλεῖ), and in the *Republic* (6.501c1–3) the guardians are to receive a thorough moral education so that they may become, so far as is possible, ‘dear to the gods’.[1]

‘Sound thinking’ and justice are the two virtues most commonly associated with becoming ‘dear to the gods’.[2] In *Alcibiades* 1.134d1–2

[1] Cf. Pl. *Rep.* 8.560b8–9, *Phlb.* 39e10–40a2, 40b2–5, and *Prt.* 345c1–3.

[2] The ever practical Xenophon has Socrates claim that skill and industry also can make men ‘most dear to the gods’: ‘Socrates said that those men were best and “most dear to the gods” who in farming did well their farming, in medicine their medical work, and in matters of the city their political work, but the person who does nothing

Socrates says to Alcibiades, 'By acting justly and with "sound thinking", both you and the city will act in a way "dear to the gods" (*θεοφιλῶς*).' Even the Cynic Diogenes is reputed to have said, 'The good are "dear" to the gods, and it is impossible for one "dear" to the gods not to fare well or for the person who is of "sound thinking" and just not to be "dear" to the gods' (frag. V B 353 [G] = Plut. *Mor.* 1102f). We turn first to 'sound thinking'. We have already seen that 'sound thinking', among its many other benefits, produces both 'proper respect for the gods' and 'religious correctness', the two components of 'service to the gods'. There is thus a causal relationship between 'sound thinking' and proper religious behaviour. Plato has Socrates give the fullest explication of the relationship between 'sound thinking' and justice in the moral realm in becoming 'dear to the gods' in this passage of the *Gorgias* (507d6–e6):

This seems to me to be the target we must live looking towards, and all the individual's efforts and those of the city should be directed to it, that is, to act in such a way that justice and 'sound thinking' will be present for the one who is going to be 'blessed' (*μακαρίῳ*).[3] He is not to allow his appetites to be unrestrained nor to attempt to satisfy them—which is an unaccomplishable evil—living the life of a pirate. Such a person would not be 'dear' (*προσφιλής*) to another human or to a god, for he is unable to form a sense of common interest (*κοινωνεῖν*), and for one for whom there is not this sense of common interest, there would not be 'mutual affection' (*φιλία*).

Just as a human who lacks 'sound thoughts' and justice cannot have a feeling of shared interest or partnership with another human and thereby win his affection, so such a human cannot be 'dear to the gods'.

In this context 'sound thinking' and justice are usually paired, but in the *Laws* (4.716c1–d3) Plato has his lawgiver emphasize 'sound thinking':

What activity would be 'dear to' and 'following' (*ἀκόλουθος*) god? There is one, and it has one very old expression, that 'like would be dear to like . . .'. The one who will become 'dear' to such a one must, as very much as he can, become such too, and by this argument the person among us with 'sound

well is neither useful nor "dear to the gods"' (*Mem.* 3.9.15). Ischomachus considers agriculture also 'most dear' to the gods (*Oec.* 15.4).

[3] Plato may have chosen *μακάριος* here because in the myth concluding the *Gorgias* he has the good and just souls going to the 'islands of the blessed' (*εἰς μακάρων νήσους*) (523a5–b2).

thoughts' (ὁ σώφρων) is 'dear' to god because he is like god, and the one not with 'sound thoughts' is unlike him, different, and unjust.[4]

'Sound thinking' is thus, both in cultic and moral terms, one necessary ingredient for proper religious behaviour.

As we turn to justice and religious behaviour, we must emphasize the importance of the phrase 'Just and "religiously correct"' (δίκαιος καὶ ὅσιος). In the Platonic tradition this phrase, common also in the contemporary oratorical and historical traditions,[5] can be used to sum up the moral life and the moral individual.[6] The relationship of these two terms, 'just' and 'religiously correct', is the major topic of this chapter, that is, how they are distinct and yet linked. The picture that emerges will be complex because in some discussions Plato treats each term as a separate and independent concept, in others he associates the two closely with one another. 'Proper respect for the gods' (εὐσέβεια) will be discussed, too, but briefly, because it plays a surprisingly minor role in philosophical treatments of the relationship of justice to human religious beliefs and actions.[7]

We begin by giving attention to a critical feature of 'service to the gods' which we introduced in Chapter 1 but left for consideration until now, that is, Euthyphro's claim, prompted by Socrates, that

[4] On this passage and its importance to later theological thought, see North, 1966: 194.

[5] In the oratorical and historical traditions (e.g. Antiphon 1.25 and *Tetr.* 1.2.2 and 3.2.9; Lysias 13.3; Isoc. 15.76 and 284; Aeschin. 2.117; Dem. 21.227; and Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.19 and 4.1.33; cf. Th. 3.84.2 and 5.104), this pair of adjectives is used of moral life and behaviour in general, of the jurors' vote, and of a speech. Here, interestingly, the pair found in the philosophical tradition as 'justice and "religious correctness"' occurs most commonly in the order '"religious correctness" and justice', preserving the usual priority of the divine and religious. In the philosophical tradition priority is often given to justice, as in Pl. *Cri.* 54b6–8, *Rep.* 1.331a4, 6.496d9, 10.615b6, *Plt.* 301d2, and *Lg.* 2.663d4 and 12.959b8–c1. For examples of 'religious correctness' first, see Pl. *Lg.* 2.663b2, 8.840d9, [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.149e8, Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.19, and Theophr. frag. 8.20 [Pötscher].

[6] e.g. Pl. *Cri.* 54b6–8, *Rep.* 1.331a3–9, 6.496d8–e3, and 10.615b5–7, and *Lg.* 2.663a9–b4 and 12.959b7–c2; [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.149e6–150a1; and Xen. *Ap.* 5. Cf. Pl. *Ap.* 32d2–3, *Grg.* 479b8–c1, *Lg.* 6.767d2–4, and Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.19.

[7] We should very much like to have Antisthenes' essay *On Injustice and 'Lack of Respect'* (ἀσεβείας) (frag. V A 41.52 [G] = D.L. 6.17). It was he who claimed that 'those who wish to be immortal must live with "proper respect" and justly' (frag. 176 = D.L. 6.5).

'justice has two parts: one involves "proper respect" and "religious correctness", that is, the part concerning "the service to the gods"; the remaining part of justice concerns the service to human beings' (Pl. *Euthphr.* 12e6–9, proposition 1 in Ch. 1).[8] From this we would conclude that everything that is 'religiously correct' is just, but not everything just need be 'religiously correct'.[9] A difficulty arises because, while that part of justice which refers to 'the service to the gods' has its own names, 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect for the gods', that part of justice that refers to the service to human beings is given no separate name and is throughout the tradition referred to by the name of the whole, that is, 'justice'. Hence, in each occurrence of 'just' or 'justice' one must, when using Euthyphro's distinctions, decide whether it refers to 'justice as a whole'—including service to both gods and humans—or to 'that part of justice' referring to humans only. The phrase 'just and "religiously correct"' and its variants reflect this dilemma and suggest that when the religious side of justice is to be understood, it must be specified. The context, too, may indicate the religious side of justice, as in *Republic* 4.443a9–10 where Socrates says that 'adulteries, neglect of parents, and "failures to serve" (ἀθεραπευσίαι) the gods' would not be characteristic of a just man. But 'just' (δίκαιος) and 'justice' (δικαιοσύνη) by themselves are not sufficient to include religious behaviour.

[8] Pl. *Grg.* 522c8–d2 may reflect this same conception of the two types of justice. For a defence of this as Socrates' own position on the issue, see McPherran, 2000*b*: 303–5 and 1996: 47–51. Diogenes Laertius concludes his life of Plato (3.80–109) with thirty-two sets of 'divisions' which he claims to have taken from a book entitled *Divisions of Plato, As Told by Aristotle*. Here (3.83) the division of justice, as follows, is threefold, not twofold as in the *Euthyphro*: 'There are three types of justice. One part concerns the gods, one part humans, and one part the dead. It is clear that those who sacrifice according to the laws and take care of sacred things (τῶν ἱερῶν) are 'properly respectful' concerning gods. Those who repay loans and deposits are acting justly concerning humans. Those who take care of tombs are clearly doing so concerning the dead.' It is generally agreed that this discussion of justice has some Platonic and Aristotelian material but that the differences do not allow it to be assigned to either Plato or Aristotle. See Rossitto, 1984: 132–4 and Mutschmann, 1906: 6. Finally, the later Stoic standard definition (unfortunately not attested for the early Stoics, except, perhaps, in *SVF* 2.1017 = Sext. Emp., *Math.* 9.124) of 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης), that it is 'justice towards the gods', indicates that the distinctions of the *Euthyphro* had a long history. On all of this see Obbink, 1992*a*: 209–10.

[9] Cf. *Euthphr.* 12a6–d3.

In the *Protagoras* Plato has Protagoras clearly distinguish between justice and 'religious correctness' as he describes contemporary education in the three virtues he views necessary for civic life: justice, 'sound thinking', and 'religious correctness' (325c5–d5):

> They teach and advise them beginning from the time they are children to as long as they live. As soon as someone understands what is said to him, his nurse, mother, pedagogue, and his father himself fight so that the child will be the best possible. In each action and word they teach and show him that one thing is just, another unjust, that one is beautiful, the other ugly, that this is 'religiously correct', that is 'religiously incorrect', and (they tell him), 'do the one, but do not do the other'.

This leads, eventually, to a major topic of the dialogue—whether justice, 'sound thinking', and 'religious correctness' are all distinct parts of virtue (*ἀρετή*), or whether they are all names of the same, single thing, that is, of virtue (329c1–d1). In the course of this discussion Socrates focuses on justice and 'religious correctness', posing the question whether 'religious correctness' is something of such a nature (*οἷον*) as to be a just thing (*δίκαιον πρᾶγμα*),[10] and if justice is such as to be a 'religiously correct' thing. Socrates says that it is his view that justice is a 'religiously correct' thing and that 'religious correctness' is a just thing, and concludes that justice is either the same as or as like as possible to 'religious correctness' and that 'religious correctness is a thing such as justice.[11] Protagoras disagrees: 'I don't think that the matter is so simple, that justice is "religiously correct" or that "religious correctness" is just. There is a difference.' At this point, after some wrangling about the nature of 'differences', Socrates abandons the topic (331a6–332a3). Whatever else we may draw from this part of the dialogue,[12] 'religious correctness' is treated as one of the major virtues, and Protagoras is unwilling to concede

[10] On the meaning of *πρᾶγμα* here, see Manuwald, 1999: 255.

[11] For the translation of *ὅτι ὁμοιότατον* as 'as like as can be', see Sedley, 1999: 313 n. 7.

[12] The modern bibliography on the question of the unity of the virtues, and here of 'religious correctness' and justice, and on the relationship to the unity proposed here and the distinction between the two proposed in the *Euthyphro* is massive; the range of it is suggested by Rademaker, 2005: 299–304; McPherran, 2000*b*; Manuwald, 1999: 236–9, 250–63; and Seeck, 1997.

that justice and 'religious correctness' are the same, or nearly the same, and Socrates gives up the attempt to dissuade him.[13]

When Plato pairs 'religious correctness' and justice, he often distinguishes between them, making 'religious correctness' refer to the gods, justice to men. Socrates' argument to Callicles in *Gorgias* 507a7–b4 is one clear example:

> The person with 'sound thoughts' would do the appropriate things concerning both gods and humans . . . And, doing the appropriate things about humans, he would be doing just things, and doing them about gods, he would be doing 'religiously correct' things. And necessarily the one who does things that are just and 'religiously correct' is himself just and 'religiously correct'.

The same distinctions, but more embedded, are found in *Laches* 199d7–e1, where Plato has Socrates take up three elements, 'sound thinking', justice, and 'religious correctness' in terms of the courageous and virtuous man.

> Do you think, Nicias, that this man would lack 'sound thinking' or both justice and 'religious correctness', the one man for whom it is fitting to be on his guard about the gods and about humans and about things that are to be feared or not and similarly to procure for himself the good things since he knows how to associate (with gods and men) correctly?

Here 'sound thinking' involves what is frightening or not,[14] justice humans and the proper association with humans, and 'religious correctness' the gods and proper association with them.[15]

Plato's old, rich, and conventional Cephalus in the *Republic* (1.331a3–b4) offers another example:

> Beautifully, Socrates, Pindar said that for a man who passes his life justly and 'religiously correctly',

[13] But Socrates later (333b4–6) treats the point as agreed upon. See Manuwald, 1999: 271.

[14] Cf. Pl. *Gorg.* 507b5–8.

[15] Often, in treating the pair justice and 'religious correctness', authors progress chiastically, as in Xen. *Hell.* 1.7.19, Lys. 13.3, and Antiphon 1.25. Here in the *Laches*, with three elements, we have a ring structure, with A ('sound thinking'), B (justice), C ('religious correctness'), then C, B, A, then B, A or A, B.

> Sweet hope attends him, a nurse in his old age,
> nourishing his heart, the hope that especially
> guides the much turning thought of mortals.

It is amazing how very well he says this. For this I posit that the possession of wealth is worth most, not for every man but for the decent and orderly one. The possession of wealth contributes a large part to not intentionally cheating or deceiving anyone and to going to the underworld unafraid because one does not owe any sacrifices to a god or money to a human being.

Here living justly and 'religiously correctly', in Cephalus' thought, is defined as not owing 'money to men' and 'sacrifices to gods'. And, fittingly, Cephalus a bit later departs to make his sacrifices to the gods.

As our final example of the distinction made between justice and 'religious correctness', we turn to Socrates' description of processions, dedications, and sacrifices in [Plato] *Alcibiades* 2.149e6–150a4:[16]

It would be terrible if the gods look to our gifts and sacrifices but not to the soul, [to see] if someone is 'religiously correct' and just. [They look to this], I think, much more than to expensive processions and sacrifices that both an individual and a city that have committed many wrongs (ἡμαρτηκότας) against gods and humans are able to perform every year.

Here justice, or rather injustice, involves 'wrongs' done to men, and 'religious incorrectness' those done to the gods.

In Book 2 of the *Republic* Glaucon presents the many-faceted argument of those who claim that the life of the unjust man is better than that of the just man. Here the unjust man, because of his ill-gotten wealth, can 'sufficiently and grandly sacrifice, erect dedications, and "serve the gods" much better than the just man', and so it is more fitting and likely that 'he will be more "dear" to the gods (θεοφιλέστερον) than the just man' (2.362b7–c6).[17] Only here do we have injustice actually promoting 'service to the gods' if not explicitly

[16] See also Pl. *Rep.* 5.463c6–d6.

[17] The Cynic Diogenes drew from similar circumstances a quite different conclusion: 'The prosperity and successes of the wicked (*improborum*) disprove all the strength and power of the gods' (frag. V B 335 [G] = Cicero, *Nat. D.* 3.36.88). Cf. frag. V B 335 [G] = Cicero, *Nat. D.* 3.34.83.

'religious correctness'.[18] And it is, of course, to the refutation of the original premise, that 'The life of the unjust man is better than that of the just man', that Plato devotes the rest of the *Republic*, with Socrates finally claiming in Book 10 that it is in fact the just man who is 'dear' to the gods (10.612e2–613b7 and 621c4–7).[19]

Justice, 'religious correctness', and 'proper respect for the gods' intersect also in the rather simple situation when the state passes laws concerning regulating religious behaviour. Here justice is a matter of obeying or disobeying the law and of the state punishing the law-breaker. In some cases, as in the illegal removal of boundary stones, Plato's lawgiver imagines two types of punishment, one (and the first) from the gods—from Zeus Horios, Homophylos, or Xenios—and a second 'under the law' (*Lg.* 8.842e6–843a8). The latter is of concern now, that is, those acts of 'religious correctness' or 'proper respect for the gods' that were governed by state-enacted laws. Justice here is not so much a religious matter as the enforcement of a law, religious or other. Plato's lawgiver establishes a number of such laws for his city: as examples, that no one is to possess sanctuaries in private homes (10.910b8) and that whoever is caught 'stealing sacred property' is to be punished (9.854d1–856a8). In these and several other cases justice consists of obeying and enforcing laws made by men, laws that here happen to concern religious behaviour.

It may be in this context that we can place the two elements injustice and 'lack of respect for the gods' in the charges brought against Socrates in 399 BCE. In Plato's *Apology* Socrates claims that Meletus is charging that he is acting unjustly by corrupting the young and by not 'recognizing' (*οὐ νομίζοντα*) the gods whom the city 'recognizes' but other, new *daimonia* (24b8–c1). An apparently more accurate statement of the indictment specifies that Socrates was 'introducing' the other, new *daimonia*.[20] Whatever specific Athenian laws there may have been before, during, or after this

[18] For Socrates' revulsion at the notion that the gods accept processions and sacrifices from individuals or cities that have 'committed wrongs' against men and gods, i.e. have been unjust and 'religiously incorrect', see *Alc.* 2.149e6–150a4.

[19] Analogously, Theophrastus claimed it was 'religiously incorrect' to offer to the gods fruits of the earth that had been stolen unjustly from another (frag. 7.14–21 [Pötscher]). Cf. frag. 12.27–42.

[20] On the text of the indictment, see Ch. 3 n. 13.

period concerning religious behaviour,[21] Socrates was charged on the basis of a law, however vaguely worded, against 'lack of respect for the gods' (ἀσέβεια).[22] We have seen that 'proper respect', in the *Laws*, involved paying due honours to the gods, personally having proper beliefs about the gods, and not introducing private cults. 'Corrupting the young' could fall under 'lack of respect' and 'religious incorrectness' if it concerned, as Socrates assumes and his prosecutor agrees, teaching the young also not to 'recognize' the gods of the city but other, new ones (Pl. *Ap.* 26b1–7; cf. *Euthphr.* 3c6–d2).[23] Thus the charges to which Socrates responds may all have been based on an existing law against 'lack of respect', and Socrates' injustice was, as in the cases of the *Laws* above, simply a matter of breaking a law, one that happened to concern religious behaviour and beliefs. Beyond that, his injustice had no intrinsic connection to the 'lack of respect for the gods', at least in the eyes of his accusers and jurors.

One may also take a purely human law, such as that which Plato's lawgiver proposes to control sexual behaviour, and, to assure obedience, make it 'sacred' (καθιερωθέν) so as to 'enslave every soul and with fear make it certainly obey the established law' (*Lg.* 8.838d6–e1 and 839c2–6). The 'fear' is that sexual licence is 'in no way at all "religiously correct" ' (840c6–9). Similarly one may assure the just behaviour of jurors and electors by having them make their votes in sanctuaries, under oath, or both.[24] In these cases the lawgiver forces the fusion of 'religious correctness', 'proper respect for the gods', and what is otherwise secular justice.

According to the lawgiver of the *Laws* and much older traditions, the laws of Sparta were owed to Apollo, those of Crete to Zeus.[25] In the *Critias* Plato makes the written orders of Poseidon the laws of his imaginary island-state Atlantis (113e7–114a4, 119c1–d2). One might

[21] On these laws and the legal basis for the charge against Socrates, see Parker, 1996: 199–217; Connor, 1991; Vlastos, 1991: 293–7; Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 30–7; and MacDowell, 1978: 197–202. See also Ch. 4 n. 57.

[22] As explicitly stated in Pl. *Ap.* 35d1–3. There is no indication that 'lack of respect' was defined in the law. As Parker, 2005*a*: 135 puts it, '"impiety" [ἀσέβεια] is merely what on a given day a prosecutor can make it seem to be'.

[23] See McPherran, 1996: 119 and Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 36–7.

[24] e.g. *Lg.* 6.753b7–c2, 755d2 and e5–6, 9.856a6–8, and 12.945e4–946c2 and 948e4–949a2.

[25] See pp. 136, 177, and 227–8.

expect that in such cases obedience to state laws would simultaneously be 'religious correctness', but, interestingly, that connection is not made. In fact, in the *Critias* obedience to the laws must be reinforced by periodic oaths that give obedience a religious sanction (119d2–120c4). That the laws are the orders of the god is, apparently, not sufficient, by itself, to provide this religious sanction. Most laws of Plato's cities in the *Republic* and *Laws* (and of Athens) were not god-given, but for such as were, those involving the founding of sanctuaries, cult 'service' to gods and heroes, burials and 'service' to the dead, and matters involving pollution, obedience, and disobedience were, as we have seen, treated as matters of both justice and 'religious correctness'. In these specific cases what is just is also 'religiously correct'. Finally, if one determines that the 'unwritten laws' that concerned incest and the proper treatment of parents, laws observed by all peoples, were, as the Socrates of Xenophon claims (*Mem.* 4.4.19–20), created by the gods, then they, too, as we see they were,[26] would be matters of both justice and 'religious correctness'. In these cases, because specific actions have been ordered or forbidden by the gods and because the states have accepted these divine rulings as laws, 'what is just is "religiously correct"', and 'what is "religiously correct" is just'. We have still not, however, got much beyond Euthyphro's claim that 'justice has two parts: one involves "proper respect" and "religious correctness", that is, the part concerning "the service to the gods"; the remaining part of justice concerns the service to human beings' (Pl. *Euthphr.* 12e6–9, proposition 1 in Ch. 1). Virtually all instances to this point may be understood in these terms, with some just acts involving only relations with humans, some 'religiously correct' actions involving only gods, and with others, subject to laws either 'made sacred' or expressly said to have been sent to humans by the gods, involving both justice and 'religious correctness'.

Plato in his developed theology moves well beyond this fairly straightforward understanding of the relationship between justice and 'religious correctness' when he claims that the gods themselves are always good and just and reward the just human in this life and the next. All human behaviour involving justice and injustice then

[26] See pp. 148, 216, and 244.

becomes, because of the god's interest, a matter of 'religious correctness'.[27] This is not the place nor am I the person to attempt to set out the whole of Plato's theodicy, but we can see in outline the steps by which Plato develops his conception of the very close relationship between justice and 'religious correctness'.

In the *Laws* Cleinias of Crete claims that the finest and best introduction for all the laws of the new state would be this statement: 'The gods exist, are good (*ἀγαθοί*), and honour justice more than (*διαφερόντως*) do human beings' (10.887b7–c2). For Plato the gods not only honour justice but are themselves just and always act justly. The gods are concerned with the behaviour of individual human beings, and, as we have seen, they cannot be swayed from their justice by human prayers, sacrifices, rituals, or incantations.[28] Plato's next step is the premise that 'like is "dear" to like', (*Lg.* 4.716c1–3), and that the human can become 'dear to god' by becoming, as far as a human can, 'like' god, a process termed *homoiosis*.[29] In *Lg.* 4.716c1–d3 the emphasis is on the 'sound thinking' of god, and the lawgiver claims that 'the person among us with "sound thoughts" is "dear to god" because he is like god, and the one not with "sound thoughts" is unlike him, different, and unjust'.[30] In the *Theaetetus* (176b1–c2)

[27] Aristotle's gods are, as it were, beyond at least the lowly forms of justice: 'We have assumed that the gods are "blessed" (*μακαρίους*) and *eudaimones*. What kind of activities ought we to assign to them? Just activities? Or will they appear ridiculous if they enter into contracts and pay back deposits and do things like that?' (*EN* 10.1178b8–12). For Aristotle, the proper divine activity is 'contemplation'.

[28] Plato devotes most of Book X of the *Laws* to establishing three of these points: the gods exist, are concerned with human beings, and cannot be swayed from justice. Elsewhere in Plato the first two are largely taken for granted. The last is, as we have seen (pp. 45–6 and 52), asserted also in *Rep.* 2.364b6–365a3, *Lg.* 12.948c4–7, and [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.149e6–150a6. For god(s) being 'good', see especially *Rep.* 2.379b1–380c10. Cf. *Lg.* 10.900c8–907b8 and *Phdr.* 242e2–3. For the gods honouring justice, being just themselves, and acting justly, see also *Rep.* 1.352a11 and 2.379a7–b1, *Tht.* 176b8–c1, and *Lg.* 6.757e3–6, 10.904e4–905c4, 905d3–6, and 907a2–b7, 11.931d1–3, and 12.948b8–9. See also [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.150a6–b1. For the justice of heroes as sons of gods, see *Rep.* 3.408b7–c4. Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 4.4.25.

[29] On Plato's conception of *homoiosis* to the gods or to god, see Mahoney, 2005; Sedley, 1999; Annas, 1999: 52–71; Meijer, 1981: 247–8; and Verdenius, 1952: 256–61 and 268–71. The process described by Plato in *Phdr.* 253a5–c2, whereby the lover imitates and tries to make his beloved into the likeness of the god whom the lover honours, is described in the context of *homoiosis* but is a quite different matter. On this passage see Sedley, 1999: 315.

[30] For the link of 'sound thinking', justice, and 'dearness to god', see also Pl. *Grg.* 507d8–e6 and *Lg.* 10.906a6–b3. For the relationship of *homoiosis* to god and,

Socrates first defines *homoiosis* to god as becoming 'just and "religiously correct", with reason (φρόνησις)',[31] maintaining the distinction between justice and 'religious correctness',[32] but then focuses on justice alone: 'God is in no way, in no manner, unjust, but is as just as possible, and there is nothing more similar (ὁμοιότερον) to him than whoever of us becomes as just as possible.' God is absolutely just, and a human, to become like him, must be both just and 'religiously correct', or, put in Euthyphro's terms, just in regards to both god and man.[33]

In Book 10 of the *Republic* Plato gives some descriptions of the benefits to the just man, the one who has become as 'like' the gods as possible. There neither the just nor the unjust person escapes the notice of the gods,[34] and the just man is 'dear to the gods' (θεοφιλής), the unjust man 'god-hated' (θεομισής).[35] For the person 'dear to the

specifically, 'sound thinking' (σωφροσύνη) in Plato, Aristotle, throughout the philosophical tradition, and in the early Christian tradition, see North, 1966, in index s.v. *homoiôsis*.

[31] For φρόνησις as a component here, cf. *Rep.* 10.621c4–7, *Lg.* 10.906a6–b1, and [Pl.] *Alc.* 2.150a6–b1. Sedley (1999: 312 n. 5) claims that 'the addition of "with wisdom"... is to make it explicit that these are genuine virtues, not habituated or otherwise wrongly motivated quasi-virtues'. See also Mahoney, 2005. It is to understate the revolutionary character of much of this, and to draw some wrong conclusions about its relationship to popular religion, to claim, erroneously, that 'the common Greek view', or 'traditional Greek sentiment', was that the Greek gods have 'superlative wisdom' (Vlastos, 1991: 163, 167, and Reeve, 2000: 35). On this, see Introduction, n. 60.

[32] 'Religious correctness' is not an attribute of the gods themselves, and Socrates here probably does not mean that a human being becomes like a god in 'religious correctness'. Rather, he becomes completely moral (the two aspects of which are captured in the phrase δίκαιος καὶ ὅσιος), with reason, that is, with reasoned understanding of morality. In that sense, 'moral with reason', he becomes like the moral and reasoning god.

[33] As we have seen, Aristotle (*EN* 10.1179a23–32), saw 'reason', not justice, as that element of god which humans should imitate and claimed that the wise man was 'dear to the gods' because he valued and practised what was dear and kindred to the gods, that is, reason. In 10.1178b25–7 human life may be 'blessed' (μακάριος) and *eudaimon* as it is for the gods to the degree that humans similarly share in 'contemplation'. In *EE* 8.1249b16–21 Aristotle associates 'contemplation of the god' with 'service' to him. Cf. *EN* 10.1177b26–1178a2.

[34] Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.19.

[35] Cf. *Rep.* 1.352a11–b3 and 10.621c4–7. One would like to know the context of the quote from Democritus (*VS* 68 B 217 = Stob., *Flor.* 3.9.30) that 'only those to whom acting unjustly is hateful are "dear to the gods" (θεοφιλέες)'.

gods' 'all things that come from the gods come as good as is possible, unless there was some necessary evil for him from a previous error'.[36] 'So must one assume about the just man, if he is in poverty or disease or one of the apparent evils, that for him these things will end up in some good (εἰς ἀγαθόν τι) for him while he lives or even after he has died. For the gods never neglect the person who wishes eagerly to become just and, by practising virtue (ἀρετήν), to become like (ὁμοιοῦσθαι) god so far as is possible for a human being' (10.612e2–613b1).[37]

Plato does not specify here the rewards that come from 'justice with reason' in this life, but Adeimantus earlier in the *Republic* (2.363a6–e3) does list the rewards that Hesiod and Homer say come from the gods to humans while they are alive: acorns and bees' nests with honey from oak trees, the thick fleece of sheep, barley and grain and the fruit of trees in abundance, fish from the sea, and the fertility of herd animals. Adeimantus claims they come to the 'religiously correct', but the quotations from the poets speak exclusively of justice. Adeimantus simply equates the justice of the poets to 'religious correctness'.[38]

In *Laws* 2.662c5–663d5 the Athenian lawgiver argues that the 'just and "religiously correct" life' is, this side of death, more pleasant than the unjust life, but it is in the Myth of Er of the *Republic* and in his several other eschatological myths that Plato describes the rewards that come to the just and moral person after his death, and in these we may take a final look at how Plato presents the relationship of justice and 'religious correctness'. Does the justice that brings afterworld rewards include 'religious correctness', or are justice and 'religious correctness' kept distinct also here? If the latter, then what is the importance of 'religious correctness' in obtaining the rewards of Plato's afterlife?

[36] Adam (1963: 2.431) takes 'from a previous error' (ἐκ προτέρας ἁμαρτίας) to mean 'the sins committed in a previous existence'. This would follow from the eschatology and metempsychosis of the Myth of Er.

[37] In his *Apology* (41c9–d3), before he has developed fully his concepts of justice and *homoiosis*, Plato can have Socrates say, in much simpler terms, that one 'must consider this one thing as true, that for a *good* man there is no evil when he lives or after he has died, and his affairs are not neglected (ἀμελεῖται) by gods'.

[38] Adeimantus does much the same, in reverse, in his critical description of the rewards Musaeus and the Orphics offer from the gods. He describes them generally in terms of justice, but his specific account of their doctrine refers only to 'religious correctness' (*Rep.* 2.363c4–d6).

In the *Meno* (81a5–b7) Socrates claims to have learned from priests, priestesses, and poets that the soul is immortal and is reborn into another body.[39] The conclusion to be drawn from this is that 'one must live one's life here "as religiously correctly as possible" (ὡς ὁσιώτατα)', with no mention of justice. In the *Phaedrus* (248a1–6 and e3–5), justice and likeness to god—no mention of 'religious correctness'—bring a better fate in the afterlife. But in Plato's other various schemes for judgement, rewards, and punishments in the afterlife, both justice and 'religious correctness', kept distinct, come into play. Acts and people that are both unjust and 'religiously incorrect' are more harshly punished, to the extreme, than those merely unjust, and acts and people that are both just (or 'good') and 'religiously correct' are better rewarded, again to the extreme, than those who are merely just. In the Myth of Er, Plato's Socrates gives specific examples of injustices: causing the deaths of many, betraying cities or armies, and enslaving people. He then describes the punishments for 'lack of respect' (ἀσεβείας) for gods and parents and for slaying with one's own hand.[40] The culminating example of punishment in the afterlife is Ardiaeus, a tyrant, who had killed his father and older brother and committed many other 'religiously incorrect' acts. Incorrigible, he is to spend eternity in Tartarus. A tyrant is the most evil of Platonic figures, so his 'religiously incorrect' deeds outdo and receive greater punishments than simple unjust acts. By contrast, individuals who had done good works (εὐεργεσίας εὐεργετηκότες) and had been 'just and "religiously correct" ' receive rewards (10.615a5–616a4). Plato puts in Socrates' mouth in the final, lyrical paragraph of *Republic* (10.621b8–d3) the broadest statement of the nature of these 'victory prizes' for those who practise 'justice with reason':

So, Glaucon, the myth (of Er) was saved and did not perish. It might save us, if we believe it, and then we will make a good crossing of the River Lethe and

[39] Parker (2005*a*: 99) points to the oddity here of 'priests and priestesses' offering 'speculative exegesis of rites', and concludes that, on the basis of this one passage, we must either revise 'established assumptions' about priestly activities or assume that 'Plato is using "priests and priestesses" in a loose way which will include religious specialists of all types'. Morgan (1990: 49–50) may be correct that these priests and priestesses were 'Orphic Pythagoreans'.

[40] For αὐτόχειρος φόνου as 'slaying with one's own hand', see Adam, 1963: 478.

will not be polluted in our souls. If we believe me, thinking that the soul is immortal and able to endure all bad and good things, we will always hold to the upward path and will in every way practise justice with reason so that we may be 'dear' (*φίλοι*) to one another and to the gods, both when we remain here in this place and when we fetch the rewards of justice, like victors claiming their pay, and so that here and on that 1,000-year journey that we have described we may be successful.[41]

So, too, in the *Phaedo* Socrates has all souls judged individually, 'those who had lived well (*καλῶς*) and "religiously correctly" (*δσίως*), and those who had not' (113d3–4). Those who had committed lesser crimes were eventually purified, but those who stole sacred property, committed many unjust and illegal murders, and such acts—all of which we have seen to be 'religiously incorrect'—were cast into Tartarus to be punished forever. Those who assaulted a parent or killed someone but came to regret it faced a one-year stay in Tartarus, longer if their victims did not forgive them. But those who were exceptional in living their life 'religiously correctly' were freed from the prison-like place in which humans dwell and rose to 'a pure dwelling place'. If they had also in life purified themselves by means of philosophy, they would achieve the ultimate reward, an eternal, bodiless life in an even better, indescribable residence (113e1–114c6). But 'religious correctness' was, as it were, a prerequisite. Here, too, injustice and 'religious incorrectness' combine for the worst punishment, good deeds and 'religious correctness', with philosophy, for the greatest rewards.

In the *Gorgias* Plato has Socrates both open, as here, and close his myth (or, as he calls it, his 'account') of the afterlife with an assertion of the importance of 'religious correctness' alongside justice (523a5–b4):[42]

There was, then, this law about human beings in the time of Cronus, and it has always existed and still exists now among the gods. The person who has passed his life in a just and 'religiously correct' manner, when he dies, goes off to the Islands of the Blessed to dwell in complete *eudaimonia*, away from

[41] For similar statements linking justice and the just to 'dearness to gods', see e.g. Pl. *Euthphr.* 9b7–11, *Rep.* 10.612e2–613b7, and [Pl.] *Alc.* 1.134d1–2 and *Clit.* 407d4–5. Cf. Pl. *Lg.* 8.838b10 and 9.879c3 and Arist. *Rh.* 2.1399a22–6.

[42] On the distinction between 'myth' and 'account' (*λόγος*) here, see Dodds, 1959: 376–7.

evils, but the one who has lived unjustly and in a 'godless way' (ἀθέως) goes to that prison of punishment that they call Tartarus.

As in the Myth of Er, the example of an individual so wicked that he cannot be rehabilitated is a tyrant, here Archelaus of Macedon, who in acquiring and securing this throne reportedly had killed his uncle, cousin, and brother, violating *xenia* in the process. He is made the model of those who, because of their licence to act as they wish, commit the greatest and 'religiously most incorrect' (ἀνοσιώτατα) crimes (470d5–471d2, 525c1–d6).[43] Again, the combination of injustice and 'religious incorrectness' is characteristic of the worst, truly incorrigible souls. In summing up the myth of the *Gorgias* Socrates tells how Rhadymanthys and Aeacus, two of the judges in the underworld, admire and send to the Islands of the Blessed the soul that has lived in a 'religiously correct way' and with truth, whether as a private citizen or not. To this group Socrates makes his own addition (ἔγωγέ φημι), relevant to the topic of the dialogue, of 'the philosopher who in his life did his own business and did not meddle in that of others' (526c1–5).[44]

In each of these eschatological myths, as in passing comments on the afterlife elsewhere in the dialogues,[45] Plato clearly distinguishes between justice and 'religious correctness'. 'Proper respect for the gods' is at issue once, but otherwise 'religious correctness' dominates, involving some of those components of human behaviour we have seen associated with it throughout this study: respect of the gods' property and of parents and the avoidance of killing, particularly kin-killing. Again justice involves behaviour concerning other human beings, 'religious correctness' that behaviour affecting the gods' interests. Extreme violations of both together can bring eternal condemnation to the punishments of Plato's Tartarus. On the other hand, the completely moral person is 'just and "religiously correct" ', and he, or his soul, must be both, as well as, for Plato, philosophical, to attain the highest rewards available in the afterlife. For Plato, in

[43] Cf. Pl. *Plt.* 301c6–d3.

[44] On this passage see Dodds, 1959: 383.

[45] e.g. *Rep.* 1.331a3–9, 6.496d8–e3, and *Lg.* 10.904e4–905c4, 12.959b7–c2. The Laws of the *Crito* are analogous to gods and urge Socrates to do what is just and 'religiously correct' to achieve what is 'better' in this life and the next (54b2–d2).

most of his accounts, neither 'religious correctness' nor justice alone will get you to heaven. You need justice and 'religious correctness' with reason, that is, with philosophical understanding of what both are.

In summary, despite the argument that Plato has Socrates put forward in the *Protagoras*, that justice and 'religious correctness' are the same or nearly the same, Plato throughout his writings presents, if we put it in the terms set forth in the *Euthyphro*, justice towards men and justice in 'service to the gods', that is 'religious correctness', as distinct virtues. And, we must add for 'religious correctness' those matters such as respect for parents and kin-killing in which the gods take an interest. Some acts may be just only, some 'religiously correct' only, and some, such as obedience to state laws regulating religious behaviour, both. What is unique to Plato, and of monumental importance, is his claim that the gods, being perfectly just themselves, are concerned with human actions that are just only, not necessarily 'religiously correct', and that they favour and reward those simply just, or, better, those just with a philosophical understanding of justice. Because the gods are just and promote human justice, it becomes 'religiously correct' to behave justly, and we can now see the point of Socrates' famous statement that he fears 'that it may not be "religiously correct" to be present when justice is being disparaged and to give up and not help justice as long as one is breathing and able to speak' (*Rep.* 2.368b7–c3; cf. 4.427d8–e2).[46] But, as we have seen, even in the rewards or the punishments of the afterlife Plato distinguishes between justice towards humans and 'religious correctness' towards gods and their interests. They are, as Protagoras objected, 'different', and both are necessary, along with philosophical understanding, for the ultimate rewards.

The remote god(s) of Aristotle and Epicurus are not interested in human justice and 'religious correctness' in the ways Plato describes them, but among the early Stoics Chrysippus, although describing 'good men' (*οἱ ἀγαθοί*) instead of 'just men' and 'wicked men' (*οἱ πονηροί*) instead of 'unjust' ones, also has the Stoic god, sometimes called Zeus,

[46] Less famous, but equally put into a religious context, is the report of Cleanthes (*SVF* 1.558) that 'Socrates cursed the first person who separated "the just" and "the beneficial" as having done a deed that showed "disrespect" (*ἀσεβές*).'

and 'the gods' in general concerned with justice. His Zeus is the 'origin' (ἀρχή) and 'genesis' (γένεσις) of justice, and for him the gods punish the wicked because they deserve it and to provide warning examples for other humans. Unlike Plato, Chrysippus allows that, according to the *logos* of Zeus, sometimes bad things happen to good men, but only when it accrues to the benefit of the larger society such as the city. In Chrysippus we also see a hint of the division between secular morality and religious morality, the secular justice and the 'religious correctness' of Plato, but again with different terminology. For him the gods can be a contributing cause (παραίτιοι) neither to what is 'shameful' (τὰ αἴσχρα) nor to 'lack of respect' (τοῦ ἀσεβεῖν).[47]

Plato's claim that *all* human actions involving justice are of concern to the gods and hence are *all* matters of 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect' is revolutionary. It goes well beyond what I, at least, have found to be the presentation of justice and 'religious correctness' in tragedy, history, and Athenian oratory and even philosophy before and during Plato's time. In my studies of the Athenian orators and Xenophon, of tragedy, and of Herodotus, in each of which I have tried to take account of the conventions of the different genres and the differences among the various authors of each genre, I have over the years stressed the distinctions in practised religion between 'religious correctness' and justice, and have found them to be much in terms outlined by Euthyphro.[48] In my earliest statement of this, which I think still holds true, I concluded that the gods of practised religion were concerned with human justice only so far as their own prerogatives were threatened. Crimes such as theft, embezzlement, assault, rape, and so forth did not concern these gods unless the crime included also some act of 'impiety'. Gods might be induced to direct their attention to other forms of morality if the humans invoked their names as witnesses to an oath. But even there the gods punished the violation of the oath, an 'impiety', not the failure repay a debt or to abide by the terms of a treaty. The gods showed virtually no concern for the numerous areas of human justice, or even morality, that lay outside the areas of proper behaviour

[47] *SVF* 3.326 = Plut. *Mor.* 1035c; 2.1175 = *Mor.* 1040b–c; 2.1176 = *Mor.* 1050e; and 2.1125 = *Mor.* 1049d–e. On all of this see Gould, 1970: 156–9.

[48] See e.g. Mikalson, 1983: 28; 1991: 178; and 2003: 134–5.

towards them.[49] In light of the revised and, I think, refined terminology for 'piety' I have employed in this book, I would restate this conclusion, in more Greek terms: in the practised, popular religion of Socrates' and Plato's Athens, worshipped gods such as Athena Polias and Poseidon Soter were believed to be concerned primarily, perhaps exclusively, with that part of justice that involved 'service to the gods', that is, with humans' 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect'. If this conclusion is accepted, then Plato in his claim, that *all* human actions falling under the rubric of justice, not just those involving 'service to the gods', are observed by and rewarded or punished by the gods, stands at the furthest remove from the practised religion of this time and, therefore, in this area, contributes little, except by way of contrast, to our understanding of popular religion. Other scholars of Greek religion see the gods of practised religion promoting the cause of human justice in much wider areas than I do,[50] and to support this claim they turn to the poetic sources, particularly tragedy.[51] They are

[49] Mikalson, 1983: 27–38. See also Versnel, 2002, especially 41–7; Adkins, 1960: 255. I defer to others on the study of justice and piety in Homer, Hesiod, and lyric poetry, especially Pindar. A good place to begin is Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus*. I share his conclusion that such extensions of Zeus' and other gods' interests into secular justice as there are, or, in Lloyd-Jones's terms, the concept of Zeus as a champion of Justice developed from the notion 'that a god is affronted by any infringement of his rights within a particular sphere' (p. 49). See also Nilsson, 1957. Noteworthy here is also Bowra's, 1964: 76 comment on Pindar: 'The gods watch the doings of men and take their own part in them, but they are not for Pindar guardians of morality except in certain spheres which belong to them and where any infringement of their rights is a personal affront.' In our terminology, Pindar's gods are, according to Bowra, concerned only with 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect for the gods', not with all acts that fall under the category of human justice.

[50] On the various claims 'in literature' of the justice of the gods in punishing unjust human actions, and the various exceptions and 'outs' allowed, see now Harrison, 2007: 375–80.

[51] For arguments that tragedy is a reliable source for practised religion well beyond what I have allowed in *Honor Thy Gods*, see Parker, 1997 and Sourvinou-Inwood, 2003 and 1997. For a broader discussion, including tragedy, of the value of 'literature' as a source for Greek religious beliefs, see Harrison, 2007. Connor, in an article (1988) much cited to claim that the sacred and secular, or the religious and moral, were merging in classical Athens, investigates the uses of the phrase τὰ ἱερὰ καὶ τὰ ὅσια (in this context, 'the sacred and non-sacred', as described in my Introduction, n. 39) not so much to argue that sacred and secular were merged as that the sacred (τὰ ἱερά) remained a vital force in classical Athens and was employed in various ways, especially in oaths, to reinforce what otherwise would be purely secular justice among humans. A merger of the two, that is, divine concern for justice among humans was,

much less inclined than I to maintain the distinctions, outlined in the Introduction, between state cult religion, the theology of the poets, and that of the philosophers. There is, as I have argued in *Honor Thy Gods* (1991) and here, much to be learned about popular religion from both the tragedians and philosophers, but in the realm of human justice I see the evidence for cult religion at strong variance from that of the tragedians and other poets and from that of the philosophers. But even those who think the gods of Greeks' personal beliefs were concerned with justice in broader terms do not see there the wide-ranging theodicy of Plato's perfectly just gods. These questions involve the whole moral structure of Greek practised religion and the validity of the possible sources of evidence for that. These are large and difficult questions and are far from being settled. They will require treatment in a separate book.

We cannot leave the topic of justice and 'religious correctness', however, without another look at the *charis* relationship between gods and humans. It is, as we have seen, a major element of the 'service to the gods', and Robert Parker (1998) has brilliantly demonstrated that, *within this relationship*, Greeks from Homer on assumed that the gods returned 'delightful favour' for favour in a fair and predictable manner. Upon this assumption, found throughout Plato's works too, depends the whole cultic relationship of humans and gods, that cult acts establish 'title' to reciprocal benefits. When Plato criticizes the gods and their actions as the poets represent them, he is faulting them for being immoral, unjust, and therefore unsuitable models for human behaviour, never for failing to fulfil their divine obligations in the *charis* relationship essential to the cultic relation between gods and men. In tragedy anxieties about the reality

as Connor correctly describes it, certainly evident in some poets and, as we also have seen, in some philosophers. But in terms of practised religion, that is, in terms of state cult (versus the theology of the poets and that of the philosophers—as described in the Introduction), Connor's own examples give clear evidence of a recognition of the distinction between the sacred and the secular, or, in the terms of concern here, between τὰ ἱερά and τὰ ὅσια, however much the former were used to support the latter. Kearns's (1995: 513–19) expansion of Connor's argument for the merger of the religious and the moral depends almost exclusively on poetic sources. Von Staden (1997: 184–5) sees the distinction between, in my terms, 'religious correctness' and 'justice' maintained in the Hippocratic oath.

of divine *charis* are occasionally expressed,[52] as they are in Herodotus' famous description of Croesus' complaints, after his many dedications to Delphi, about Apollo's failure to return *charis*. But even these few questions raised are usually resolved, with the humans coming to understand the god's response.[53] Parker expresses this mutual exchange of 'delightful favours' between humans and gods in terms of reciprocity, but reciprocity is one form of justice, 'to return what is owed', the first definition of justice in the *Republic* (1.331c1–e4) and one that certainly did not satisfy Plato's Socrates, but one that must have been widely accepted in non-philosophical circles.[54] In these terms, in the *charis* relationship fundamental to practised religion, the gods were assumed to be just and to reward acts of 'religious correctness' and 'proper respect' in the 'service to the gods'. The gods prove, again, to be concerned with justice not in the abstract and not in all areas of human behaviour, but in those areas of immediate concern to them, that is, in the components of 'service to the gods'.

[52] e.g. E. *Ion* 881–922, *HF* 344–7, and *Tr.* 820–59.

[53] On the resolution in the *Ion*, see lines 1609–22; on that in the *HF*, Mikalson, 1986. On the resolution of the charges Croesus makes of 'lack of *charis*' against Apollo in Herodotus 1.90.2–91.6, see Mikalson, 2003: 162.

[54] For the lack of *charis* being unjust, see Xen. *Mem.* 2.2.1–4.

6

Philosophers and the Benevolence of the Greek Gods

> If there is any other gift of gods to humans, it is logical that *eudaimonia* is god-given, especially so considering the extent to which it is the best of human things.
>
> (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.1099b11–13)

Plato insisted that the gods are 'good' and are responsible only for the 'good' in human life, never for the 'evil'. Here we investigate whether and to what extent other philosophers of his time and his immediate successors shared these views and how Plato and the others related such ideas to the gods of practised religion. Our focus is on gods of popular religion, but the philosophers introduced into their discussions of these topics also other types of gods, particularly the demiurge, creator of the universe, and the celestial deities, and so must we.[1]

A major peril in this investigation lies in attempting to determine which kind of 'god' the philosopher is describing at a given moment, and that can be determined, when it can be determined, only by the context of the discussion. When a god is given a cult epithet or is put into a cult setting, the case is clear. Less clear are instances when a philosopher speaks in general terms about 'the gods', without clearly indicating which category of gods he intends, and here I have had to make decisions about whether these 'gods' refer directly to or include the gods of practised religion. Plato's *Euthyphro* offers a good example of the vagaries here. What begins as a discussion of whether the gods in

[1] On the distinction between celestial gods and those of cult, see pp. 19–22.

an Athenian context would approve or disapprove of Euthyphro's actions in prosecuting his father (that is, whether it was 'religiously correct' or not) is deflected, I think, by Euthyphro's transition (at 5e2) to gods of a different type, those represented in the epics of Homer and Hesiod.[2] Instances similar to this cause numerous difficulties in determining which 'gods' are involved in any particular discussion, and others may well dispute my individual decisions, but a first attempt to sort out these matters is, I think, worthwhile, because it concerns the critical issue of the response of Greek philosophers to the religion of their time. The first question I raise is how the gods of cult were known to humans. The answer to that question leads to broader questions of the benevolence of the gods in general, and I approach that by considering the role of the demiurge who created the universe, the contributions of named cult gods to human life, including those gods who 'uphold' the city as a whole and those who are 'lawgivers', and finally the various philosophical theories on the origins of human belief in the gods.

KNOWABILITY OF THE GODS OF CULT

That the gods of cult were knowable was certainly the majority, usually unexamined view even in the philosophical tradition, in contrast to the notorious agnostic opening of Protagoras' *On the Gods*: 'I am not able to know if the gods exist or do not, or what they look like. Many are the things that prevent my knowing: the "unclarity" (ἀδηλότης) of the gods and that the life of a human being is short' (frag. *VS* 80 B 4).[3] The Athenians' reaction, the burning of his

[2] See 6b7–c4 for Socrates' reaction.

[3] For this interpretation of ἀδηλότης see Müller, 1967: 146. On Protagoras' statement, its philosophical background and possible context, see Burkert, 1985: 312–13; Kerferd, 1981: 165–8; and Müller, 1967. On the question of Protagoras' atheism, see Parker, 1996: 213 n. 56. Melissus of Samos, of the Eleatic School and a contemporary of Protagoras, likewise claimed that there was not 'knowledge' (γνῶσις) of the gods (*VS* 30 A 1 = D.L. 9.24). On Melissus see Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, 1983: 390–401. For the agnostic side of Xenophanes, see *VS* 21 B 34, Lesher, 1992: 155–69, and Kerferd, 1981: 163–4. For the argument that the Cynic Diogenes was also an agnostic, see Goulet-Cazé, 1996: 71–3.

books, and the flight of Protagoras from Athens,[4] may be an indication that they took Protagoras to be writing about gods they worshipped, to be guilty of 'lack of respect' towards their gods.[5] The Athenians and other Greeks took no such measures against contemporary poets and philosophers who levelled criticisms at or raised questions of their existence against the gods of the literary tradition.

The invisibility of the gods is, of course, a problem in knowing them.[6] But Xenophon's Socrates urges Euthydemus not to wait to see 'the visible forms (τὰς μορφάς) of the gods', but to be content, 'seeing their deeds (τὰ ἔργα)', to honour and 'respect' them. 'The gods, in giving good things to us, do not give them by making epiphanies (εἰς τοὐμφανὲς ἰόντες), nor does the god who orders and holds together the whole universe. Invisible to us, he manages all these things.' This god and the other gods are like the thunder, the winds, and the soul. 'And the soul, which shares, if anything human does, in the divine, clearly rules in us but is itself not seen.' 'Considering these things, one must not scorn the invisible but from what happens learn the power of them and honour the *daimonion*' (*Mem.* 4.3.13–14). The lawgiver in Plato's *Laws* distinguishes between two types of god: those gods, by which he means the sun, moon, and stars, which we clearly see and honour.[7] 'Of the others we erect statues in which we delight (ἀγάλλουσι) even though they are lifeless (ἀψύχους), but we believe that the living gods because of these statues have great goodwill and *charis*' (11.930e7–931a4).

Such thoughts were not limited to the philosophical tradition. As we have seen, Plutarch (*Pericles* 8.6) claims that Pericles in a public funeral oration of *c.*440 BCE said, 'We do not see the gods themselves,

[4] Frag. *VS* 80 A 1 = D.L. 9.52. For the evidence and for discussion of this event, see Derenne, 1930: 45–55. For doubts about elements of the traditional account, see Parker, 1996: 208; Wallace, 1994: 133–5; Dover, 1988: 142–5 = 1976: 34–7; and Müller, 1967: 148–59.

[5] The Athenians had much the same reaction against Anaxagoras who denied that the sun and moon, which were not worshipped as cultic gods in Athens, were gods. The sun, however, fell into a special category of 'god'. See pp. 20–1.

[6] The invisibility, hence unknowability, of divine matters make them a promising subject of eristic argumentation (Pl. *Sph.* 232c1–3).

[7] If one conceives of the sun, moon, and planets as deities, their visibility, of course, contributes to the proof of the existence of the gods. See e.g. Pl. *Lg.* 7. 820e8–822d1, 10.885e7–886a5, 899b3–c1, *Cra.* 397c8–d5, *Ti.* 41a ff, and [Pl.] *Epi. passim.*

but we infer their existence from the honours they have and from the good things they provide us.' Pericles interestingly concludes that the gods exist not only from their good deeds but also from the honours humans give them, and this is the point of the Stoic Zeno's syllogism which we also saw in Chapter 4: 'One might reasonably honour the gods. But one might not reasonably honour those who do not exist. Therefore the gods exist' (*SVF* 1.152 = Sext. Emp., *Math.* 9.133).[8] In the same vein is the argument of the Stoic Chrysippus, that because altars exist, gods exist (*SVF* 2.1019). Zeno's 'honours' and Chrysippus' 'altars' are both examples of one Stoic approach to knowing god(s), that is, that individuals can develop a preconception (*πρόληψις*) of god by observing the world around them.[9] It was, of course, primarily by viewing the regular order of the heavens that Stoics could acquire such a preconception of god, and we take that up more fully in the following section on the origins of belief in gods.

If we can know the gods without seeing them, we may not, however, know their real names. In one section of the *Cratylus* (400d1–408d5) Plato has Socrates propose etymologies for gods' names, an endeavour that Socrates prefaces with comments on the two types of 'correctness' of gods' names.[10] The first is that of the true names that the gods call one another. The second is of the names humans give them, by custom (*νόμος*), in prayers. These are names and patronymics in which the gods find *charis*.[11] Humans must resort to the latter because 'we know nothing about the gods, either about them or about the names that they call one another' (400d6–401a2).[12] The names that humans use of the gods are thus matters of human custom and convention but still involve 'religious correctness' and establish *charis* with the gods.

At a completely different level Plato's lawgiver gives some indications of how non-philosophical Greeks came to believe that the gods existed (*Lg.* 10.887c7–e7):

[8] On Zeno's syllogism, see Ch. 4 n. 68. On Chrysippus', Algra, 2003: 162–3.

[9] See ibid. 157–8.

[10] For Socrates' professed but probably playful fear concerning the proper use of gods' names, see Pl. *Phlb.* 12b7–c4.

[11] In *Cra.* 404c2–3 it is the human *nomothetes*, 'the maker of *νόμοι*', who establishes the name for Hera.

[12] On this claim, remarkable in Plato, that 'we know nothing about the gods', see Dodds, 1951: 220. Cf. *Phdr.* 246c6–d1.

How might one not speak with emotion about the existence of the gods? One necessarily is annoyed with and hates those people who have been or are now responsible for these arguments, people who do not believe the myths they used to hear from their nurses and mothers from earliest childhood when they were still being nourished with milk.[13] Like incantations these myths were told both playfully and seriously, and these people used to hear them in prayers accompanied by sacrifices.[14] And they saw associated with the sacrifices and prayers spectacles (ὄψεις) which the young person most happily sees and hears when sacrifices are made.[15] They saw their parents acting in the greatest seriousness on behalf of them and themselves, talking to the gods in prayers and supplications as if the gods most certainly exist. And they heard how all Greeks and non-Greeks, involved in all kinds of misfortunes and successes, prostrate themselves and kneel down at the risings and settings of the sun and moon.[16] And Greeks and non-Greeks do these things not thinking that the gods do not exist but that they most certainly do exist, and showing in no way suspicion that the gods do not exist.

Here, leaving behind philosophical argument, the exasperated lawgiver essentially expands on Pericles' thought that we know the existence of the gods from the honours they receive. Plato's description makes us realize that ancient, non-philosophical Greeks learned of the existence and no doubt of the names and much more of the gods informally, through the family, without the formal instruction of churchgoing youth today.[17]

[13] On the emphasis on 'nurses' and 'mothers' here, see Bremmer, 1995: 34.

[14] On this metaphorical use of ἐπῳδή in the *Laws*, see Dodds, 1951: 226–7 n. 20.

[15] England, 1921 *ad loc.* would have these ὄψεις be 'scenic or mystic presentations'. Much more likely are the processions, pageantry, and contests that accompanied festival sacrifices and prayers.

[16] Such prostrations and kneelings were unusual in Greek worship (Burkert, 1985: 75), and worship at the time of the rising and setting of the moon is unattested for the Greeks, and that at the rising and setting of the sun is rarely attested (Pl. *Smp.* 220d3–5 and Hes. *Op.* 339). Persians among the non-Greeks are known to have worshipped the sun and moon (Pl. *Cra.* 397c8–d2 and Hdt. 1.131.2), and Plato has probably been carried away by his thought of 'non-Greeks' to include the prostrations and these times of worship here. See Mikalson, 1989: 97–8.

[17] Of interest here is Reverdin's (1945: 244–7) summary of the lifetime education in religion in the city of Plato's *Laws*. On the (scanty) evidence for religious 'instruction' in ancient Greece, very much along the lines of Plato's description, see Bremmer, 1995.

In *Laws* 3.681a7–c2 the lawgiver recognizes how Greek settlement patterns and education caused beliefs about the gods to vary from city to city. Individual settlements, because they were remote from one another, developed some idiosyncratic customs (ἴδια ἔθη) concerning the gods and themselves, and the elders then impressed (ἀποτυπουμένους) their preferences on their children and grandchildren. And, of course, each settlement or city is pleased most by its own conventions (νόμοι).

We may conclude this brief look at the real-life practicalities of 'knowing the gods' with *Epinomis* 988a1–5, where the author claims that Greeks better than non-Greeks would 'take care of' (ἐπιμελήσεσθαι) 'service' to the gods because they employed their education, Delphic oracles, and 'all their "service" in accordance with their laws/conventions (νόμους)'.

With the exception of prayers, sacrifices, and rituals to subvert justice which we have seen, Plato does not fault what young people learn of the gods from the prayers, sacrifices, and other cultic behaviour of their religious community.[18] He is, however, very concerned with the myths that the young are told of the gods by their mothers, nurses, and, in *Republic* 2.383c1–5, their teachers. These are the myths by which the souls of the young are moulded (2.377c21–6), and most of those currently told must be thrown out (2.377c5–6). He extends this concern to the divine myths told to adults.[19]

In *Republic* 2.365d8–e2 Adeimantus describes those who claim that 'we do not know and have not heard if the gods exist and are concerned with us from any other sources than from the *nomoi* and the poets who have written genealogies of them'. The *nomoi* here are probably not laws of the state but conventional practices—the sacrifices, prayers, and such of *Laws* 10.887c7–e7.[20] As for the poets, Plato elsewhere specifies Hesiod and Homer as sources of these myths, and Herodotus (2.53), two generations earlier perhaps, had said of these same two epic poets that 'they are the ones who created a divine genealogy for Greeks, gave

[18] Plato's one sustained attack on contemporary cult practice, that of the Orpheotelestai and 'begging priests' (*Rep.* 2.364b6–365b1), centres on fringe private practices, not on those of mainstream state cult.

[19] *Rep.* 2.378c8–d2, 380b6–c4, and 3.387b4–6.

[20] If we take, with Slings and Burnet, νόμων of manuscript F as the correct reading here, not the λόγων of A and D.

their epithets to gods, distributed their offices and the crafts, and marked out their outward appearances'. That is, these poets essentially made the gods what we think them to be from the Greek literary and artistic traditions.[21] And Plato adds to the 'myth-makers' other poets, specifically the lyric and tragic poets.[22] These myths may also exist only in prose form (2.380c1–2), but Plato focuses on the poets.

Plato attempts to add to these two sources of knowledge about the gods—the *nomoi* and the poets—a third source: philosophical inquiry and the truths derived from that.[23] The prime example is *Republic* 2.377c1–3.392a7, where Socrates through philosophical arguments lays out basic truths about the gods: that they are perfectly good, do only good, and cause all that is good, beneficial, and leading to success; and that they never change form and appear to humans in altered forms, or lie or deceive humans in phantoms, words (probably 'oracles'), or divination. Anticipating these conclusions or deduced from them is that the gods do not hate, make war on, plot or fight against one another;[24] do not act violently and unjustly towards their parents or hate their kin; do not lament the dead as though the dead are suffering something bad; are not overcome by laughter or sexual lust; and, as we have seen before, cannot be bribed by gifts.[25] In the course of this long discussion Socrates quotes numerous passages, mostly from Homer, that contradict his philosophically derived view of the gods. If Socrates' depictions of the gods are true, contrary depictions by poets must be false, are harmful to the morality of the people, and must be excluded from the city that is to be 'just and "religiously correct"'. All poetic myths, old and new, about the gods must be judged by whether they reflect and support or not the true nature of the gods as developed by Socrates.

[21] On the import of this statement, see Mikalson, 2005: 34–5.

[22] e.g. *Rep.* 2.377d3–5, 379a7–9, c9–d1, 380a2–9, 381d4–6, 383a7–b9, 3.387b1–2, 388a5, and 408b7–8. It is noteworthy that Plato does not criticize the caricatures of the gods in old comedy. They, occasional and ephemeral, perhaps never attained the level of myths retold to the young.

[23] We have thus here the three types of 'god', those of the *theologia fabularis*, *theologia civilis*, and *theologia naturalis* described in the Introduction.

[24] Cf. Pl. *Euthphr.* 5e5–6c4.

[25] On the last, see also *Rep.* 3.408b7–c4. For Aristotle's rejection of the poets' claims that the divine is 'jealous' (*φθονερόν*), particularly of the acquisition of knowledge, see *Metaph.* 1.982b29–983a5.

THE DEMIURGE

It may seem perverse to begin a discussion of the benevolence of the gods of practised religion with the deity seemingly most removed from cult traditions, the demiurge, a product purely of the philosophical tradition, the deity who in primal times created the universe and all things in it. But what Plato and Xenophon say of him reflects much of what they say of the benevolence of gods in general, and, most importantly, Xenophon makes appreciation of him a motivating factor for worshipping, in traditional ways, the gods of cult. This appears in conversations he has Socrates engage in with three individuals. For Aristodemus, who did not sacrifice, pray, use divination, or honour the gods, Socrates argues the need to 'respect' the gods from the benefits this divine demiurge, sometimes spoken of as a 'god', sometimes as 'the gods',[26] in 'his concern for' and 'thought about' humans,[27] created for humans in the original design of the universe (*Mem.* 1.4.2–16).[28] In this long discussion Socrates describes the benefits to humans of each element, but for our purposes a simple listing of the elements is sufficient. For the benefit of humans the divine demiurge created eyes, ears, noses, tongues, eyelids, eyelashes, eyebrows, incisors and molars, mouths, the desire to procreate and raise children, the desire of living, the fear of death,[29] wisdom, walking upright, hands,[30] language, constant (not seasonal) sexual urges, superiority to other animals, and souls by which humans know the gods exist, ward off hunger, thirst, cold, heat, diseases, acquire strength, learn, and remember. Last on this list of the benefits of the demiurge is

[26] On the varying uses of '*daimonion*', 'demiurge', 'demiurges', 'god', and 'gods' in this passage, all referring to the same thing, see Beckman, 1979: 249–50.

[27] The common Greek word for this 'concern for' is ἐπιμελεῖσθαι and cognates (e.g. Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.14, 4.3.3 and 12; Pl. *Ap.* 41d2, *Phd.* 62b6–7 and d2–3, *Rep.* 2.365d8–e1, *Lg.* 4.713e1, 10.900b2–3, 901e9, 902c1–2, 905b6 and d2, and 907b5–6); for 'think about' is φροντίζειν (e.g. Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.11 and 14; Pl. *Lg.* 10.885b7–8, 886d8–e1, and 888d5–6).

[28] For differing views on the relationship of Xenophon's account to Platonic presentations of Socrates' views, see Ch. 2 n. 4.

[29] This is one of the elements that inclines Vlastos (1991: 162) to reject the authenticity of this passage as reflecting Socrates' own views.

[30] On hands and feet, see also *Mem.* 2.3.18.

divination. Xenophon's Socrates wishes to convince also Euthydemus of the need to 'respect' and honour the gods, and concentrates explicitly on their φιλανθρωπία, the 'dearness' they feel for human beings (4.3.5 and 7). The list of benefits here includes light, night, stars, water, fire, seasonal movements of the sun, goats, sheep, cows, horses, asses, the ability to reason, the senses, the ability to explain through words, and, again concluding and culminating the list, divination (4.3.2–13).[31] For Hippias the Socrates of Xenophon describes the 'unwritten laws' that must be god-given, laws that dictate 'respect' (σέβειν) for the gods, the honouring of parents, avoidance of incest, and the return of good services, each of which benefits humans. Xenophon has Socrates put these many benefits from benevolent gods, from the time of the structuring of the universe to the immediate present, in the context of cult, of 'service to the gods'. He describes them in order to convince each interlocutor to 'respect', honour, and 'serve' the gods.

The divine demiurge that Xenophon's Socrates describes to Aristodemus is an almost cartoonish simplification of the demiurge whose activities Plato has Timaeus of Epizephyrian Locris, a famous astronomer and philosopher, describe to Socrates in the *Timaeus* (28a4–92c9). His demiurge created, or had the gods he created create, the universe and everything in it.[32] Of immediate interest to our topic, the benevolence of the gods, is that this demiurge is himself 'good' (ἀγαθός) and wanted all things to be 'good' like himself (28c2–30a7). He created everything credited to him by Xenophon and a great deal more, including the elements of the universe (fire, air, earth, and water),[33] time, days and nights, the

[31] On Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.2–16 and 4.3.2–13 and the uncertain origins of various elements of these arguments from design, see Parker, 1992. On 4.3.2–13 see also Beckman, 1979: 249. For similar views expressed in Plato's *Laws*, see e.g. the sun, earth, stars, and well-ordered seasons being evidence of the existence of the gods (10.886a2–4, d4–e2).

[32] On Plato's demiurge in the context of benevolence to human beings, an impersonal relationship *not* based on pity or love, see Babut, 1974: 99. For the argument that Plato's demiurge was not concerned with the welfare of humans, but only with the quality of his own work, work which would, when properly done, incidentally benefit humans, see Verdenius, 1952, esp. 247–52, 271–2, and 275–6.

[33] In the *Sophist* (265c1–266b4) Plato has the Eleatic stranger convince Theaetetus that all animals including humans, plants, fire, water, the other elements, in short all things usually attributed to nature, are the product of a demiurgic god rather than of an unintelligent nature functioning automatically.

sun, moon, and stars as visible gods, and vision by which to see them. All this led to reason, an understanding of number, and, in turn, to philosophy, the greatest divine gift to mankind (47a1–b3).[34] He also created the lesser gods, with Hesiodic names, and he charged them with the creation of human beings. He apparently subcontracted this for two reasons: if he himself created humans, they would be equal to the gods (so perfect was his work), and, secondly, so that he would not be responsible for evil that might be in each human being (41c2–3, 42d2–5). Human beings could not be perfect: they suffered from a corruptible and corrupting body and from a soul (or types of soul) that was impure in comparison to that of the gods. The demiurge wanted these humans to be the most 'god-respecting' of all creatures (41e4–42a1), but they were also subject to faulty perceptions and to passions of love, pleasure, pain, fear, anger, and their opposites. If they mastered these passions, they lived in justice and were rewarded with an afterlife among the stars. If they succumbed, they were, depending on the degree of their failure, reborn into lower creatures, such as women (!), birds, wild animals, snakes, or, worst of all, fish and shellfish (42a2–d2, 89d4–92c3). This bald summary does little to suggest the richness of Timaeus' 82 OCT page description which ranges from the geometric structures of the elements and their complex interactions, to the nature of soul, to the intricate workings of the senses, to the details of human anatomy and its workings, and far beyond. In essence, though, the demiurge is benevolent, responsible by his actions or commands for all the good in things that exist (68e5–6), wishing the best for mankind, and giving humans, among other things, divination as a weapon against human folly and so that they could be 'the best' they could be and 'could in some way grasp the truth' (71d1–72b5). Natural forces, both within the body and within the imperfect soul, prevent, however, most humans from realizing many and the most important benefactions of the demiurge, and by this complicated scheme Plato attempts to maintain both a completely benevolent divine creator *and* human beings

[34] In the *Philebus* (16c5–e4) Socrates makes dialectic a gift of the gods to mankind.

beset by diseases,[35] ignorance, folly, and injustice.[36] Humans can attempt, through reason and philosophy, assimilation to the all good demiurge, but only a few, a very few, can ever achieve even an approximation.

Plato, unlike Xenophon, does not explicitly place his demiurge and his benevolence in the context of practised cult, that is, as evidence that one should pray and sacrifice to the gods. Even the inferior gods he introduces in Timaeus' account, Ouranus, Cronus, Rhea, and such are drawn from poetic literature, not cult. The one clear link to practised religion is divination, and by both Xenophon and Plato it is given special prominence as an indication of the god's or gods' benevolence towards mankind.

The Stoics, like Plato's Timaeus, saw the gods, or, more usually, god designing the world for humans' benefit.[37] For Chrysippus the gods are beneficial (*εὐεργετικούς*) and philanthropic (*φιλανθρώπους*) (*SVF* 2.1115 = Plut. *Mor.* 1051e), and he even imagined that the gods intentionally provided the delicacies of humans' dinner tables (*SVF* 2.1152 = Porphyry, *Abst.* 3.20.1–2):

> The gods created us for their sake and for the sake of one another, and the animals for our sake, horses to help us in war and dogs to hunt with us, and leopards, bears, and lions to train us in bravery. The pig—and this is the most pleasing of their favours—was born for no other reason except to be sacrificed, and the gods mixed salt in its flesh, thereby devising good meat dishes for us. And so that we might have an abundance of soups and side dishes, (the god) provided oysters, purple-fish, sea anemones, and elaborate species of birds.[38]

[35] The Hippocratic author of *On the Sacred Disease* (4.48–54), as part of his argument that epilepsy is not a 'sacred' (*ἱερόν*) disease, asserts in theological terms that 'the divine', or 'god', or 'the gods' do not cause diseases: 'I claim that a human's body is not polluted (*μιαίνεσθαι*) by god, that is, that the thing most subject to death is not polluted by the thing most "pure" (*ἁγνοτάτου*). But if a body is polluted or suffers something from another cause, it might be purified and made pure (*ἁγνίζεσθαι*) by god rather than be polluted. The divine (*τὸ θεῖον*) is what cleanses and purifies the greatest and "most religiously incorrect" of our errors.'

[36] In the long 'story', termed both a *λόγος* and a *μῦθος*, of the stranger in Plato's *Politicus* (269b9–274e1), the universe possesses only good things from the divine demiurge and the causes of human ills are different from but analogous to those of the *Timaeus* (273a4–274e1). In the *Theaetetus* (176a5–8) Socrates claims that 'evils' (*τὰ κακά*) cannot be done away with entirely because it is necessary that something be opposite to 'the good'. One must not, however, situate 'the evils' among the gods. Rather, they necessarily move about among mortals and the earth.

[37] 'Divine providence is the kernel of Stoic religion', Dragona-Monachou, 1976: 82.

[38] Cf. *SVF* 2.1153 and 1154. For more on Stoic views of the pig and its soul, see Cleanthes, *SVF* 1.516 and Pearson, 1891: 269–71.

And, to judge from Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus*, lines 11–13 (*SVF* 1.537 = Stob. *Flor.* 1.1.12), the Stoics no more than Plato would accept that their god was responsible for human ills:

> Nor does any deed occur on earth without you, *daimon*,
> Nor in the divine sky nor in the sea,
> except those which evil men do by their own follies (ἀνοίαις).[39]

GODS IN GENERAL

The greatest 'goods' that Timaeus' demiurge gives to humans are sight and the reason and philosophy that result from it. Consistent with this concept of the benevolence of the demiurge, but more on the plane of contemporary human and city life, Plato has his lawgiver divide 'all the goods' (πάντα τὰ ἀγαθά) into two categories, the human and divine. The human ones, the lesser, are led by health, then beauty; third is strength in running and other physical activities; and fourth is a wealth that is not 'blind' but 'sees well' and follows reason (φρόνησις).[40] First among the divine goods is reason, second is a 'sound thinking' condition of the soul accompanied by reason (νοῦς). Justice arising from the two previous goods mixed with courage is third, and fourth is courage itself. Importantly, the lesser, human 'goods' all depend on the divine 'goods', and if a city (or a person) lacks the latter, it loses also the former (*Lg.* 1.631b2–d6).[41] Plato thus, as so often, associated the divine with

[39] The *daimon* here is Zeus. On this passage see Thom, 2005, esp. pp. 92–9. On the Stoics' concept of the benevolence or providence of god, even in the context of Stoic determinism, see Algra, 2003: 170–7 and, more generally, Dragona-Monachou, 1976.

[40] In *Grg.* 451e1–5 Socrates recalls the symposiastic drinking song according to which 'health is best, to be beautiful is second, and third is to be wealthy without deceit'. In discussion of this (452b5–7) Socrates includes strength of body under 'beauty'. On this drinking song and its possible author, see Dodds, 1959: 200–1.

[41] In *Lg.* 3.697a10–c2 the lawgiver ranks three groups of human goods. Most to be honoured are those concerning the soul, if it has 'sound thinking'. Next are those of the body and third those that involve property and money. For the lawgiver or city to violate these rankings is 'religiously incorrect', probably because, from 1.631b2–d6, the 'divine goods' would be subordinated to the 'human goods'. In 2.661a4–662a8 the lawgiver argues, without the theological element, that the 'good things' as conceived by the many (health first, then beauty, then wealth, then good sight, hearing, and perception, then doing as a tyrant as one wishes, and, finally, immortality) are in fact bad if they are not accompanied by justice and moral virtue, that is, if they are not accompanied by the 'divine goods' of 1.621b2–d6.

the moral and intellectual aspects of human behaviour, his particular concern, but links the divine also with what one finds to be goals of cultic worship in Greece: health, beauty, physical strength, and wealth.

In the *Oeconomicus* Xenophon has Ischomachus describe to Socrates as the goal of his 'service to the gods' and his objects of prayer some of these same 'human' goods: health, strength of body, and wealth 'honourably increased'. He adds to Plato's list honour in the city, goodwill among his friends, and an honourable safety in war. Plato does not make the 'human goods' of honour or goodwill a gift of the gods, but in *Republic* 10.613b9–e4 they would be among the rewards for a just individual, that is, for a person who possesses the 'divine goods' as defined in the *Laws*. Plato only once explicitly refers to divine assistance in war (*σὺν θεῷ*), and that in the nationalistic and emotional context of a eulogy for fallen soldiers (*Menexenus* 245e2–4). One does not sense that Plato imagined a deity, in the Homeric way, protecting a human on the battlefield. For the Socratic tradition, of course, death itself was not necessarily an evil and in many circumstances could be a 'good thing', especially, one might think, a death resulting from fighting in defence of one's country. With the exception of safety in war, Plato's demiurge and gods in general provide—in addition to many other good things—also what the Greeks hoped to acquire from their gods, all nicely summarized in Ischomachus' statement above.[42]

INDIVIDUAL GODS OF CULT

Plato has Socrates or others attribute a wide range of benefactions also to specific gods with clear cult associations. Apollo, for example, has the powers (*δυνάμεις*) of *mousike*, divination, medicine, purification, and bowmanship.[43] Artemis aids in childbirth and oversees

[42] For general treatments of the goods that individuals expected from their cultic gods, see Mikalson, 2005: 162–71 and Parker, 2005*a*: 387–443.

[43] Pl. *Cra.* 404e8–405b5 lists all these 'powers' of Apollo. For his role in divination and purification, see Ch. 3. For additional references for his specific contributions to *mousike*, see *Lg.* 2.653c7–654a7, 664c4–665b2, 672c8–d3, and 7.796e4–5. On Apollo's benevolence and many contributions to the city of the *Laws*, see Reverdin, 1945: 89–106, 163–7, and 249.

midwives.[44] Athena gives the crafts, war skills, and wisdom.[45] Dionysus offers *mousike*, grapes, and wine which is beneficial when properly used.[46] To Hephaestus is owed fire and the crafts using it.[47] Prometheus, too, is credited with the gift of fire.[48] Zeus gives rain, oversees the city, phratry, home, boundaries, *xenoi*, and ambassadors, and, according to Plato's Protagoras, gave mankind the skills and virtues necessary for life in the city state.[49] If we choose to include the Muses among worshipped gods, they are responsible, with their leader Apollo, for much of *mousike* and especially the inspiration of poets.[50] In every instance Plato treats these roles and gifts of the gods—all familiar from practised religion—as benefactions. No god of cult is faulted or criticized by Plato.

POLIS GODS

We learn most of the roles and gifts of named gods in the descriptions and myths Plato creates for two classes of gods: those who 'uphold' the city as a whole and those who 'made laws' for the cities they favoured. First the polis gods. Plato marks off as a special category 'the gods who hold the city' (*οἱ τὴν πόλιν ἔχοντες θεοί*, *Lg.* 4.717a6–7 and 5.745a1–3), a translation of the phrase *θεὸς πολιοῦχος* as found, for example, in the Zeus Poliouchos of *Laws* 11.921c2.[51] This Zeus

[44] *Tht.* 149b4–c4.

[45] Crafts: *Prt.* 321c8–e3, *Plt.* 274c5–d1, and *Lg.* 11.920d7–e4 and 921b7–c5. Cf. 3.679a6–b3. War skills: *Lg.* 7.796b6–c4 and 11.920e1–7. Wisdom: 1.626d3–6.

[46] *Mousike*: *Lg.* 2.653c7–654a7, 665a3–b6, and 672c8–d3. Wine: *Lg.* 2.666a8–c6, 672a5–d10. Grapes: *Lg.* 8.844d5–e5.

[47] Fire: *Prt.* 321c8–e3. Crafts: *Plt.* 274c7–d1 and *Lg.* 11.920d7–921a4.

[48] *Phlb.* 16c5–7, *Prt.* 321d3–322a2, and *Plt.* 274c7–8.

[49] Rain: *Lg.* 8.844b1–2 and c1. Zeus Patroös, Phratrios, and Herkeios: *Euthd.* 302b4–d4. Zeus Horios, Homophylos, and Xenios: *Lg.* 8.842e6–843a8 and 12.953d8–e2. Ambassadors: 12.941a1–b1. Political skills and virtues: *Prt.* 321d3–5, 322c1–323a4, and 329c2–3.

[50] *Mousike*: *Ti.* 47d2–7 and *Lg.* 2.653c7–654a7, 664c4–665b2, 672c8–d3, and 7.796e4–5. Poetic inspiration: *Ion* 533e3–535a5, 536a1–d7, and 542a2–b4.

[51] Morrow's (1960: 435 n. 124) interpretation of *Lg.* 4.717a6–7, to make all the Olympian deities of the new colony *θεοὶ πολιοῦχοι*, is unlikely. Zeus is the *θεὸς πολιοῦχος* of Magnesia as Athena is the *θεὰ πολιοῦχος* of Athens (e.g. Ar. *Nu.* 602).

Poliouchos and Athena of the new city of the *Laws* are 'partners in the government' (κοινωνοὺς πολιτείας), concerned, interestingly, especially with tort law, and they along with law assist the 'binding together of the city' (11.921c2–5). Beyond this Plato gives little indication of the role of such polis gods in his new city or in contemporary Athens, but his tales of the origins and activities of such gods in the distant past indicate their benevolence. In the *Laws* (4.713c5–714a2) he has his lawgiver relate a story, which he claims to be true, of the origin of such gods, going back to the Age of Cronus:[52]

> Cronus knew that no human nature was sufficient to administer all things on its own with full authority without being filled with both insolence (ὕβρεως) and injustice. Having this in mind, he set over our cities kings and rulers, not humans but those of a better and more divine species, *daimones*, just as we now do for the sheep and other tame herd animals. We do not make some cows rulers of cows and some goats rulers of goats, but we are their masters, a better species than they. The god, being philanthropic, in the same way put over us the species better than us, that of the *daimones*, which concerned itself with us (ἐπιμελούμενον) with great ease for both itself and us. The *daimones* were providing peace and a sense of respect (αἰδῶ) and good law (εὐνομίαν) and an abundance of justice, and they were freeing the races of humans from civil discord and were giving them *eudaimonia*. This story, employing truth, says that those cities that a mortal and not a god rules do not escape from evils and labours. This story thinks that we must imitate by every means the so-called 'life in the time of Cronus', and that we must manage our homes privately and our cities publicly by obeying what of immortality there is in us, calling the management of reason law.[53]

For Plato's lawgiver, in contemporary times one must turn to what is divine in humans, that is, to reason (νοῦς), to provide the benefits which the *daimones* gave in the Age of Cronus, but he still imagines Cronus and his city-upholding *daimones* as benevolent to human society. The lawgiver seems here to have in mind, in addition to the city he is founding, Athens, whose laws were the work of men, not, like those of Sparta and Crete, thought to have been given by the gods.[54]

[52] The lawgiver calls his story a μῦθος, but true (4.713a6 and e4). That he also calls it a φήμη (713c2) may suggest that it came to him through divination.

[53] On this passage see Morrow, 1960: 544–5.

[54] On the lawgiving gods of Sparta and Crete, see pp. 136, 177, 195, and 227–8.

In the *Timaeus* Plato uses the setting of Athena's Panathenaea to have the prominent and wealthy fifth-century Athenian Critias recount a history handed down in his family, a history that the Athenian statesman Solon (*c.*630–559 BCE) had heard from an Egyptian priest. About 9,000 years before Solon's time, before the great floods, Athenians had anticipated Egypt by 1,000 years in establishing their civilization and political structures, both of which the Egyptians later adopted and both of which look remarkably and intentionally like those created by Plato in the *Republic*.[55] At this time Athena, whom the Egyptians later adopted under the name Neïth, obtained Athens as her allotment among the gods and 'raised' (ἔθρεψε) and 'educated' (ἐπαίδευσε) it.[56] She took up the seed of the Athenians from Earth and Hephaestus, an expurgated version of the Athenian national myth of their own origins. This Athena was war loving and wisdom loving (φιλοπόλεμός τε καὶ φιλόσοφος), and benefited the new Athenians in both ways. She taught them the use of shields and spears, and she also selected for them a temperate locale so that it might produce the 'most thoughtful' (φρονιμωτάτους) men, men most like herself. These Athenians lived under 'good law' (εὐνομούμενοι) and 'surpassed all men in every virtue (πάσῃ ἀρετῇ), as was fitting because they were offspring and pupils of the gods'. Critias then goes on to describe the empire created by those Athenians 9,000 years before Solon's time. Here Plato has an unmistakably Athenian and benevolent Athena see to the welfare of her initial Athenians those many, now forgotten years ago (23d1–24d6).

The same Critias in the dialogue named after him, presented as a sequel to the *Timaeus*, relates much the same story but with some noteworthy additions and modifications. Here the gods, again 9,000 years before Solon's time, divided up all the earth and obtained the parcels that befit them 'by the lots of justice'.[57] They then, like colonists, settled their lands and were 'raising' their property and

[55] *Ti.* 25d7–e5 and 26c7–d6.

[56] On the Athena (and Poseidon) of the *Timaeus* and *Critias*, see Garvey, 2008.

[57] Plato, significantly, has the parcels of earth divided among the gods 'by the lots of justice', and not, as in Athenian national mythology, by hotly contested races of gods to their preferred sites. Here as elsewhere Plato's gods do not fight or contend with one another.

creatures as shepherds do sheep.[58] By persuasion of soul, not by force on the body, the gods were guiding every mortal creature and were putting things in order. Athens fell by lot to not just Athena, as in the earlier account, but to Athena and Hephaestus, sister and brother, both devoted to love of wisdom and love of the crafts (*φιλοσοφίᾳ φιλοτεχνίᾳ τε*). Their land was naturally suited to virtue and 'thoughtfulness' (*ἀρετῇ καὶ φρονήσει*), and after they created good, autochthonous men, they put in these humans' minds the (proper) arrangement of political affairs (*Critias* 109b1–d2). In this remodelled version Athena is not the only polis god of Athens, but she is joined as an equal by Hephaestus. This is a remodelling of the cult realities in Athens, a product of original thinking about Hephaestus' role in the Athenian autochthony myth. But here, too, the polis gods of Athens are concerned with and contribute significantly to Athenian 'thoughtfulness', virtue, crafts, and political organization. For the last they do not simply give the laws—as Zeus did for Crete or Apollo for Sparta—but they put into men's minds a political structure from which the laws could be deduced. The Athenians themselves made the laws. There is no evidence that Athenians, in cultic religion, shared a conception of the ultimately divine origin of their laws, even one step removed from the actual laws, but the idea has literary antecedents as in, for example, Aeschylus' *Eumenides*.

In the model funeral oration of the *Menexenus*, purportedly composed by Aspasia and reported by Socrates, Plato has Aspasia, as proof that the city of Athens is 'dear to the gods' (*θεοφιλής*), offer a third variant on the origin and role of the polis gods in Athens (237c5–238b6). Here humans already exist, and the land itself (Ge), as the 'mother' of Athens,[59] initially brought forth barley, grain, and olives for human sustenance, providing food for humans as a mother does for her children. Ge herself then introduced gods as rulers and teachers of her 'children', and these gods prepared for them their livelihood and taught them the skills of everyday life, including the acquisition and use of weapons. Aspasia does not name these gods,

[58] They are thus analogous to Cronus' *daimones* in *Lg.* 4.713c5–714a2, above.

[59] In Athenian myth and in the *Timaeus* Ge received the seed of Hephaestus, the seed that produced the autochthonous Athenians.

'for we know them',[60] but they are clearly Athena and Hephaestus as in the *Critias*.

In the *Critias* (112e6–121c5) Plato has Critias retell also the account of Atlantis that Solon had heard from the Egyptian priest. This story, like that of the origins of Athens, is from that remote period 9,000 years before Solon's time. For Atlantis the polis god is Poseidon, and Plato offers a description of his cult that is imaginary but still largely based on Greek realities. In the same allotment of lands 'by the lots of justice', Poseidon won Atlantis where he had previously mated and had children with Cleito, an orphaned native girl. Poseidon remodelled the physical geography of Atlantis, creating, among other things, a central island for his sanctuary. He 'put into order' Atlantis with ease, as a god can, and provided hot and cold running springs and sustenance of all kinds. He settled there the ten sons he had had with Cleito, five pairs of twins, and, after dividing Atlantis into ten parcels, gave one parcel to each son to rule, reserving the central parcel, where he had mated with Cleito, and the kingship of the whole for his eldest son Atlas. On this central parcel, inside the palace complex, was the sanctuary of Poseidon and Cleito, enclosed by a gold peribolos wall. Poseidon's temple was 660 ft. long, 300 ft. wide, and proportionately high.[61] It had a 'non-Greek' appearance (*εἶδός δέ τι βαρβαρικόν*): the outside was plastered with silver, the acroteria were gold, the ceiling was of ivory elaborated with gold, silver, and orichalcum, and the walls, columns, and floors were of orichalcum.[62] The cult statue was of Poseidon mounted on a chariot drawn by six winged horses, all of gold, with the god's head reaching the top of the roof. Around him were 100 Nereids on dolphins. Surrounding the temple were, as dedications, golden statues of his ten sons and their wives and descendants as well as dedications of the kings and of private individuals from Atlantis and the lands Atlantis ruled. In front of the temple was an altar similar in

[60] It is quite likely that the naming of ouranic gods in a funeral oration was thought inappropriate, perhaps even 'religiously incorrect'. They are not named in other surviving funeral orations.

[61] That is, roughly twice the size of the Parthenon.

[62] In Plato's version, orichalcum, usually identified with copper or bronze, was a precious metal, second only to gold in its time, and was known only by name in the classical period (*Criti.* 114e2–6).

size and workmanship to the whole complex. The size and materials of the temple and of the dedications are fabulous, but the design of the sanctuary of Poseidon is very Greek, comparable in many respects to that of Athena Polias on the Acropolis of Athens.

As a polis god this Poseidon of Atlantis fashioned the land, provided water and food, begot its royal family, designed the underlying political structure, and left behind for his people 'commissions' (ἐπιστολαί) concerning the distribution of power among his sons, 'commissions' that were recorded on a stele of orichalcum in his sanctuary. Every fifth or sixth year the ten kings of Atlantis gathered there and with special rituals selected a bull, sacrificed it, and poured its blood over the stele. They swore an oath with curses against those disobeying Poseidon's 'commissions', then cleansed the stele and poured a libation. They swore that they would judge legal cases and would rule and be ruled in accordance with the laws on the stele. Then, in the night, sitting on the offerings made in association with that oath,[63] they judged the legal cases pending. For the people of Atlantis Poseidon was thus giver of much that was good—the land, food and water, the royal family, and the system of government, all of which contributed to the great power of the city. Plato gives special emphasis to the system of government and has the kings of Atlantis rededicate themselves to these laws periodically through the most potent rituals known to the Greeks.

To these three sets of polis gods in the remote past, the *daimones* of Cronus, Athena and Hephaestus of Athens, and the Poseidon of Atlantis, Plato attributes only what is good and what is intended to ensure the health, prosperity, and success of their respective city states. Each also contributes essential elements of law and education that will establish the proper moral and political condition of the residents of the state he or she 'oversees'. But the moral, political, and physical excellence established by these polis gods obviously does not exist in Plato's time. In part what was necessary for them was forgotten over the millennia as natural disasters wiped out or impoverished the population. For the Atlantans 'the human character' (τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἦθος) began to prevail, humans began to lose sight of the 'true life leading to *eudaimonia*' (ἀλήθινον πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν βίον), and Zeus decided to punish them,

[63] On the special nature of this type of oath-taking, see Faraone, 2005.

justly of course, for their own good (*Critias* 121a8–c5). Plato does not, however, present the human failures as the gods' responsibilities. They had designed their countries completely to the benefit of their residents, and the goods they created were lost by human frailties including death, forgetfulness, and immorality. Plato has the gods give the initial goods, and in the *Laws* he makes it possible for humans to re-establish and maintain them through a divine gift, 'reason' nourished by philosophy. Mankind, not gods, is responsible for the loss of the goods, and man can reclaim them only through the 'divine' in him.

LAW-MAKING GODS

As part of their role as polis gods the Athenian Athena of Plato's *Timaeus* and *Critias* and the Poseidon of Atlantis in the *Critias* are responsible, to some degree, for some of the laws of the country they 'uphold'. In the initial founding of Athens Athena (or Athena and Hephaestus together) provided a climate that produced 'thoughtful' men of virtue and put into their minds the arrangement of political affairs.[64] In Athens, then, humans devised their own constitution based on the reason and ideas provided by Athena. For Atlantis Poseidon, also at its inception, gave 'commissions' that, apparently, described only the basics of the constitution, that is, the ten kingships, the distribution of power among them, and the laws by which the kings were to deal with one another.[65]

In antiquity Crete and Sparta were especially praised for their 'good law', and two gods, Zeus for Crete and Delphic Apollo for Sparta, were given much of the credit. In Plato's account, Zeus' human son Minos met with Zeus in his cave on Crete[66] every nine

[64] *Ti.* 24c4–d6 and *Criti.* 109c4–d2.

[65] *Criti.* 119c5–d2. The laws described in 120c5–d5 probably go back to the 'commissions' of Poseidon.

[66] According to [Pl.] *Minos* 319e2–3 they met in the very cave that the Athenian lawgiver and his companions of the *Laws* are on their way to visit. For an account of Minos' tutelage under Zeus and of his bad reputation in Athens, see *Minos* 318c4–321b4. The *Minos* is generally thought not to have been written by Plato, but to be a contemporary work. For the argument that it is Plato's, see Morrow, 1960: 35–9.

years and on the basis of Zeus' statements (or oracles, φήμαι) established the laws for the Cretans he ruled.[67] Delphic Apollo similarly in his concern for the Spartans created the dual kingship and through the human Lycurgus established the laws for Sparta. He accomplished his work with Lycurgus through prophecy, but Plato never clearly indicates whether he imagines Apollo to have given the laws to Lycurgus or only to have approved by an oracle laws proposed by Lycurgus.[68] The distinction may not have been important to Plato, however, because he regularly treats Apollo as the 'lawgiver' of Sparta.[69]

The activities of these divine lawgivers are imagined in the past, in the distant past, 9,000 years before Solon, for Athens and Atlantis, in the almost historical past, 300 years previously, of Lycurgus for the Spartans. With these initial formulations of the political structures and some detailed laws in the past, the direct law-making in secular matters of the divine *nomothetai* was finished.[70] From that time on the humans made their own additional laws for which the Athenian lawgiver imagines the Athenians and himself using the 'divine element' within themselves, not the external intervention of the gods.[71]

In terms of the benevolence of the gods, Plato views all these law-making activities of the gods as contributing only to the good of mankind. For Athens and Atlantis they created great, powerful, and moral nations. The contemporary laws of Crete are 'right', 'they bring *eudaimonia* to those who use them', and 'they provide all good things' (*Lg.* 1.631b2–6; cf. [Pl.] *Minos* 320b4–7).

[67] Pl. *Lg.* 1.624a1–625a4, 632d1–4, 634a1, and 2.662c5–7. Cf. [Pl.] *Minos* 318c4–321b4.

[68] *Lg.* 1.624a1–5, 632d1–4, 634a1, 2.662c5–7, and 3.691d8–692b7. In 3.696a4–b1 the prophecy is attributed to 'some god'. The dominant view in Plato's time was that Apollo through an oracle approved of legislation drafted by Lycurgus (Hdt. 1.65, Xen. *Lac.* 8.5, Plut. *Lyc.* 5–6, and Strabo 10.4.19). On this and other aspects of Plato's treatment of the relationship of Cretan and Spartan laws and of Apollo's contribution to the latter, see Morrow, 1960: 32–5.

[69] *Lg.* 2.662c5–7. In 1.634a1 the 'lawgiver' of Zeus is surely Minos and the 'Pythian lawgiver' of Sparta is probably Lycurgus.

[70] For the continuing law-making of Apollo of Delphi in some religious matters, see pp. 131–9.

[71] *Lg.* 4.713e6–714a2.

ORIGINS OF BELIEF IN THE GODS

A survey of philosophical theories on the origin of humans' belief in the gods offers the best way to move beyond Plato and see whether other philosophers treated the gods as primarily or completely beneficent to mankind.[72] The gods of Epicurus and the god of Aristotle do not interact with humans and so may be judged neither benevolent nor malevolent. But for the views of other philosophers we may turn to Cleanthes, the student and successor of Zeno as head of the Stoa. Cleanthes in summary fashion listed four causes that led humans to believe in gods. We begin with his account not as a statement of Stoic theology,[73] but because it encompasses, as we shall see, most of the theories held by philosophers before his time (*SVF* 1.528 = Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 2.5.13–15):[74]

> Cleanthes spoke of four causes that ideas of gods were formed in the minds of humans. First he put this one, about which I just spoke, which arose from the foreknowledge of future things. Second is that which we have taken from the multitude of good things that are obtained from the temperate constitution of the sky, the fertility of the land, and from the abundance of several other benefits. The third cause is that which frightens men's minds by thunderbolts, storms, clouds, snow, hail, devastation, plague, rumblings and movements of the earth, rains of stone, bloody drips of rain, sinkings or sudden gapings of lands, by portents contrary to the nature of humans and herd animals, by torchlights seen in the sky, by those stars that the Greeks call comets . . . by two suns . . . Frightened by these things, men have supposed that there is some celestial and divine power. The fourth cause, and perhaps the greatest, is the regularity of the movement and the revolutions of the sky, sun, moon, and the differences, variety, beauty, and order of all the stars. The mere viewing of these would sufficiently indicate that they are not by chance.[75]

[72] On philosophical explanations proposed for humans' belief in the gods, see Nilsson, 1961: 281–9 and 1967: 768–70, 840–1. See also Kahn, 1997*b*.

[73] For which see Algra, 2003: 158–62; Gerson, 1990: 154–5; and Dragona-Monachou, 1976: 71–108.

[74] Cf. Cicero, *Nat. D.* 3.7.16.

[75] On all elements of this passage and for numerous parallels throughout Greek and Latin literature, see Pease, 1955–8: 2.580–8. See also Pearson, 1891: 282–4.

We may briefly summarize these four causes of belief in the gods as follows: (1) foreknowledge of the future through divination;[76] (2) the many good things humans receive from the climate, the earth, and other sources; (3) the fear humans feel at natural and unnatural events and portents; and, (4) the regularity, order, and beauty of the movements of the sky, sun, moon, and stars. Of these only one (3) inspires fear, and that concerning only phenomena of nature. The others, we might say, arise from gratitude (1 and 2) and awe (4). Let us take them up individually.

Divination, as we have seen throughout, was, with a few exceptions (Xenophanes and Epicurus), a vital element even in the philosophical tradition. Xenophon's Socrates does not claim that humans' belief in gods originated with divination, but does argue that the practice of it implies that the gods exist and makes divination one proof of divine concern for human beings.[77] Aristotle offers as one of his two causes for humans developing the idea of gods 'what happens to the soul through "inspirations" (ἐνθουσιασμούς) and prophecies in sleep'.[78]

Cleanthes' second cause for the origin of belief that gods exist is the many good things that humans experience 'from the temperate constitution of the sky, the fertility of the land, and from the abundance of several other benefits'. We have already seen that Plato has the Athenian Critias attribute Athens' good climate, one that produced 'thinking men', to Athena,[79] and elements of fertility in terms of crops, animals, and humans are credited variously to a divine demiurge or his divine agents and to Artemis, Dionysus, Ge for Athens, and Poseidon for Atlantis.[80] Plato gives to Protagoras a unique version of the Prometheus myth according to which Prometheus stole fire from Athena and Hephaestus and gave it and its

[76] Cicero had written about the *praesensio futurarum rerum* in *Nat. D.* 2.3.7–4.12, and there it is clear that he combines *praesensio* with *praedictiones* of future events, i.e. not just a 'presentiment' of future things but also 'knowledge' of them through divination. What is at the centre of this 'cause' is divination. See Pease, 1955–8: 2.580.

[77] Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.5 and 1.4.14–15 and 18. Cf. *Smp.* 4.47–8 and Pl. *Ap.* 29a2–5. On this see Ch. 3, esp. p. 118.

[78] Aristotle, frag. 10 [Rose] = Sext. Emp., *Math.* 9.20–2.

[79] Pl. *Ti.* 24c4–d3 and *Criti.* 109c4–d2. Cf. *Plt.* 272a5–b1.

[80] Demiurge and his agents: Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.7 and 12; Pl. *Ti.* 41d1–3, 77a3–b1, 80d7–e1, 91a1–d6. Artemis: *Tht.* 149b4–c4. Dionysus: *Lg.* 2.666a8–c6, 672a5–d10, and 8.844d5–6. Ge: *Menex.* 237e1–238b2. Poseidon: *Criti.* 113e2–6.

related life-preserving and -enhancing skills to humans as their 'divine portion' (*θείας μοίρας*). Because of this (new) kinship (*συγγένεια*) with the god humans alone of living creatures 'recognized gods' (*θεοὺς ἐνόμισεν*) and set up altars and statues of them (*Prt.* 322a3–5).[81] Under 'the abundance of several other benefits' we may include all the other benefactions of the various types of gods listed in the preceding pages. For Xenophon's Socrates these many good things are a reason one should now honour, respect, and 'serve' the gods (*Mem.* 1.4.10). Cleanthes has taken the same argument further back, as to why humans initially came to believe in gods, but for our purposes the essential point is much the same: humans believe in gods because they give *good* things.

Even some of those philosophers who view the gods as merely constructs of humans put their origins in the 'goods' that humans enjoyed, not in the ills they suffered. Prodicus of Ceos, a contemporary of Socrates, claimed that 'men of old considered gods the sun and moon, rivers and springs, and generally all the things that benefit our lives because of the benefit from them, just as the Egyptians do the Nile'. 'From these the idea (*ἔννοιαν*) and all "proper respect" for gods came to men.'[82] Prodicus is probably also the author of the theory, often attributed to Persaeus, a disciple of Zeno and admirer of Prodicus, that primitive human beings considered gods also the first human benefactors of humanity, individuals who invented foods, shelter, and the crafts (*SVF* 1.448). In these terms, the Demeter who first taught humans the production of grains was a human, later divinized by humans for her benefactions, as was Dionysus who first taught them wine.[83] Euhemerus of Messene in Sicily, in the time of the Macedonian king Cassander (311–298 BCE), like Prodicus denied

[81] On this myth, how much of it is Protagorean and how much Platonic, and how it can be reconciled with Protagoras' agnosticism, see Manuwald, 1999: 176 and 188–93 and Müller, 1967: 140–8. On Prometheus, Athena, and Hephaestus as the original givers of skills to humans, see also Pl. *Plt.* 274c5–d1 and *Lg.* 11.920d7–e4.

[82] Frag. *VS* 84 B 5; *P.Herc.* 1428 frag. 19.12–16 of Philodemus, *On Piety*; and Cicero, *Nat. D.* 1.42.118.

[83] On Prodicus' authorship of both these theories and on his relationship to Persaeus, see Henrichs, 1975: 107–23 and 1984. On Prodicus' activities and status in Athens, see Willink, 1983 and Henrichs, 1976: 19–21. On whether or not Prodicus was, in fact, an atheist, see Parker, 1996: 213 n. 56.

that gods existed, for which he was labelled an atheist.[84] And also, like Prodicus, he saw primitive men divinizing humans who were benefactors. 'When men were not yet civilized, those who could by force and intelligence constrain all people to do what they ordered wanted more admiration and respect and attributed to themselves superhuman and divine power, and this led to them being considered gods by common people' (frag. 27 [W]).[85] 'Because of their benefactions (εὐεργεσίας) to men, they received immortal honour and reputation, as did Heracles, Dionysus, Aristaeus, and the others similar to these' (frag. 25.9–12 [W]). As one example we may take Euhemerus' Zeus as described in his *Sacred History* (frags. 56–69B [W]). Himself human, descended from the equally human Ouranus and Cronus, this Zeus became a great warrior and king and travelled around the world five times, setting up altars and cults of himself in the countries he visited. He made a law against the cannibalism attributed to his forebears, and, in addition, established many other laws, served as a judge of human disputes, and gave to humans grain crops and 'many other good things'. At an advanced age he returned home to Crete, died, and was buried at Cnossus. He, like the other humans/gods described by Euhemerus, continued to be honoured with cult for the benefactions he bestowed on his fellow men.

Poetic texts require a quite different analysis than philosophic ones, and we do not wish to open the door to all poetic texts and all the poets, but we can hardly exclude from this topic the famous fragment of the satyr play *Sisyphus*, variously attributed by ancient and modern scholars to the now familiar Critias or to Euripides. It is subject to all the vagaries of fragments of drama—for examples, we do not know the context, how this speech figures into the unhappy fate of the speaker Sisyphus, or the intent of the poet—but it has established for itself a major place in the modern study of Greek

[84] On Euhemerus' theories and their later influence, see Nilsson, 1961: 283–9. For whether or not he considered the celestial bodies deities, see [Winiarczyk] on frags. 25–8.

[85] Cf. frag. 23 [W]. As Meijer, 1981: 231 n. 45 aptly notes, 'The essence of euhemerism is not deification of men (as already is found probably in Prodicus . . .) but in selfdeification of men.'

theories of the origins of humans' belief in the gods.[86] It is, at the very least, something that a poet could imagine some kind of character saying on the subject in the late fifth-century Athenian theatre. It propounds a theory that a 'sagacious and wise man' (*πυκνός τις καὶ σοφὸς γνώμην ἀνήρ*) invented the idea of all-seeing, all-hearing, and all-knowing gods to prevent humans from breaking the laws in secret. It was a conscious lie, but one intended to use fear of the gods to stop humans from even thinking of committing an illegal act. So, too, here, even in the most Machiavellian and cynical theory of the origin of belief in the gods, these gods contribute to the welfare of the human race, and through them their human inventor 'quenched the illegality' rife among men of the time (frag. *VS* 88 B 25).[87] In sum, although Prodicus, Euhemerus, and Critias/Euripides each offer somewhat different theories on how humans created gods, the theories share the premise that these gods owe their origin to the benefactions they, real or not, could or did provide to humans.

The author of the *Sisyphus* had his inventor of the gods locate them in a place whose very name, he knew, would especially terrify humans, the place from which humans experience both fears and benefits, the place of lightning, thunder, the sun, and rain. It was to instil fear that he installed the gods in the sky (frag. *VS* 88 B 25), and this serves to introduce the third of Cleanthes' causes of human belief in the gods: the fear of natural and unnatural celestial phenomena. From our sources, Democritus in the second half of the fifth century was apparently the first philosopher to claim that from unexpected phenomena in the sky humans came to 'the idea of gods' (*ἔννοιαν θεῶν*). 'Men of old, seeing the happenings in the heavens above, like thunder, lightning, thunderbolts, conjunctions of the stars, and eclipses of the sun and moon, were afraid, thinking gods were the causes of these' (frag.

[86] On the attribution, the problems of interpretation, and general background to the fragment, see Kahn, 1997*b*; Davies, 1989; Burkert, 1985: 314–15; Meijer, 1981: 230–2; and Dihle, 1977. Yunis (1988*b*) convincingly associates another fragment of Euripides (1007c [Nauck-Snell]) with this passage and thereby allows a better understanding of its immediate context. For precedents for elements of the Sisyphus passage, traces of it in Plato and Aristotle, and its afterlife in Roman political theory, see Döring, 1978.

[87] For a similar opinion, very briefly expressed, in Aristotle, see *Metaph.* 12.1074b3–5.

VS 68 A 75).[88] To Democritus such fear was unjustified, because 'the gods give all the good things to humans but not what is bad, harmful, and unbeneficial' (frag. B 175), and he no doubt explained such celestial phenomena by his theory of atoms, without divine intervention. Although he would not have accepted Democritus' claim that the gods give all good things, or, for that matter, anything, Epicurus and his successors used the atomic theory of Democritus to 'remove from humans the fear of celestial phenomena',[89] and labelled as false the belief that celestial phenomena indicate the existence or action of the gods. Unlike the Epicureans the Stoics accepted the regular movements of the sun, moon, and stars as proof of the existence of god, as we shall see, but Zeno's and Chrysippus' physical explanations of thunder, lightning, eclipses, and comets[90] were no doubt intended, as were the Epicureans', to remove fear of these events. For Stoics celestial phenomena were to be objects of awe, not fear. It is important to note that the philosophical tradition put forth this cause of belief in the gods, that is, fear of celestial phenomena, only to debunk it.[91] The fear of such phenomena as divinely motivated was a feature of popular religion and hence attracted the philosophers' attention, but it is the only one of Cleanthes' four causes of human belief in the gods to be universally rejected in the philosophical tradition.

By contrast Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics much preferred Cleanthes' fourth cause for the origin of belief in the gods, the viewing of the regularity of the movements and revolutions and of the variety and beauty of the sun, moon, stars, and planets. Aristotle in a fragment of his lost dialogue *On Philosophy* (frag. 12 [Rose] = Cicero, *De*

[88] Cf. *P. Herc.* 1428, frag. 16.2–9 of Philodemus, *On Piety*. On this theory of Democritus, see Henrichs, 1975: 93–106. On Democritus see also Burkert, 1985: 314.

[89] For Epicurus see D.L. 10.96, 100–4, and 142–3 and Plut. *Mor.* 1106c–d. The argument is made most fully and passionately by the Roman poet Lucretius, who was much indebted to Epicurus, in his *De Rerum Natura*, e.g. 5.1161–8, 1183–93, 1204–40 and Book 6, *passim*.

[90] Zeno: *SVF* 1.117, 119, 120, 122; Chrysippus, 2.703. That in his hymn Cleanthes puts the thunderbolt in the hands of Zeus (1.537, lines 5–6) reflects his Stoic conception of Zeus as primal fire. For the Stoic theology behind this, see Thom, 2005, esp. 22 and 76–9.

[91] For the claim that Cleanthes himself put forward this argument, which was contrary to both his personal views and Stoic belief in the providence of god, only as an attack on Epicurean theory, see Dragona-Monachou, 1976: 82–8.

Natura Deorum 2.37.95) offers not the first but the most dramatic account of this 'cause':[92]

> If there were humans who always had lived under the earth in good and well-lit houses which were adorned with statues and paintings and were fitted out with all those things that people who are thought prosperous have in abundance, and if they never had come above ground but had heard by report that there was some power and force of gods, and if at the same time the depths of the earth opened up and these people made their way from their hidden abodes to these places that we inhabit and if they were able to get out, then, as soon as they had seen the earth, seas, and sky, had realized the greatness of the clouds and the force of the winds, and had seen the sun and had realized not only its great size and beauty but also what it produced, that it made day with its light spread in the whole sky, and, if, when night darkened the lands, these people saw the whole sky decorated and adorned with stars and the changing of the light of the moon as it waxes and wanes, and the risings and settings of all the celestial bodies and their movements that in all eternity are fixed and changeless—when these people saw all these things, surely they would think gods exist and that these things, so great, are works of gods.[93]

Plato, apparently first in the philosophical tradition, claimed that men first believed in the gods and should believe in them because of viewing the beauty and regularity of movement of the celestial bodies.[94] In the *Cratylus* (397c8–d5) he has Socrates say, 'The first of humans around Greece appear to have believed that these alone were gods, the ones that now many of the non-Greeks consider gods, that is, the sun, moon, earth, stars, and the sky. Since they saw them always moving on the run and "running" (*θέοντα*), they named them "gods" (*θεοί*) from the nature of this "running" (*τοῦ θεῖν*).' In the *Laws* Plato has the lawgiver claim that humans should believe gods exist because of the existence, order, and regularity of celestial bodies.[95] It is to understand these celestial gods and their regular movements and to 'speak well' (*εὐφημεῖν*) of them that the children

[92] Cf. frag. 10 and 11 [Rose] = Sext. Emp., *Math.* 9.20–2 and 27.

[93] On this passage and on Aristotle's *On Philosophy*, see Tarán, 1975: 143–4 and 148–9; Pease, 1955–8: 2.783–7; and Jaeger, 1948: 158–61.

[94] On Plato's celestial gods, see pp. 19–22.

[95] 7.821b2–d4, 10.885e7–886a5 and d4–e2, and 899b3–c1.

of Magnesia are to be required to study astronomy (7.820e8–822d1). 'A person', in the lawgiver's judgement, 'cannot become securely "god respecting" (θεοσεβής) unless he grasps two truths: that soul is the oldest of all things generated and, immortal, rules all bodies, and, secondly, the reason (νοῦς) that governs all things in the stars' (12.966d6–968a1).

Cleanthes saw the origin of man's belief in the gods in the viewing of the heavens. For his fellow Stoics Zeno and Chrysippus the existence, order, and movement of the celestial bodies were strong proof of the existence of god. Chrysippus formulated the argument thus (*SVF* 2.1011 = Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 3.10.25):

> If something exists which a human cannot make, then the one who makes it is better than a human. A human cannot make the things which are in the sky. The one who was able to make them is therefore superior to a human. Who except a god is able to be superior to a human? God, therefore, exists.[96]

To the four causes listed by Cleanthes we should add Epicurus' statement that nature itself impresses an idea (πρόληψις) of gods on humans.[97] Epicurus probably did not have in mind Cleanthes' fourth cause here because he did not consider the celestial bodies deities.[98] It may be better explained by his claim, following Democritus' atomic theory, that actual physical images emanated from the gods themselves and appeared to humans in dreams.[99] To close our survey of causes of belief in the gods we should recall the proposition attributed to Pericles and echoed by Zeno, that humans know the gods from the good things they provide and from the honours they receive.

[96] Cf. *SVF* 2.1012 = Cicero, *Nat. D.* 2.6.16 and Cleanthes, *SVF* 1.529 = Sext. Emp. *Math.* 9.88–91. See Algra, 2003: 162; Dragona-Monachou, 1976: 112–14; and Gould, 1970: 153–5. I cannot forbear quoting here Thomas Jefferson's letter to John Adams, April, 1816: 'I hold, on the contrary, that when we take a view of the universe . . . the movements of the heavenly bodies so exactly held in their course by the balance of centrifugal and centripetal forces; the structure of our earth itself, with its distribution of lands, water and atmosphere; animal and vegetable bodies, whether an insect, man or mammoth; it is impossible, I say, for the human mind not to believe that there is in all this, design, cause and effect, up to an ultimate cause, a Fabricator of all things from matter and motion.'

[97] Frag. 352 [Usener] = Cicero, *Nat. D.* 1.16.43. Cf. *Ep.* 3.123.

[98] Frag. 342 [Usener] = Aëtius, *Plac.* 5.20.2, and Plut. *Mor.* 1123a.

[99] On this, see p. 124. For the possibility that Epicurus derived this idea from Democritus, see frags. *VS* 68 B 166 and A 78.

Our various avenues of inquiry, including (1) the knowability of the gods, (2) the god-to-human relationships of the demiurge, of the gods in general and individually, and of the polis and law-making gods, and (3) the various theories about the origin of humans' belief in the gods, all lead, with the exceptions noted, to the same conclusion. In the philosophical tradition all these gods are benevolent, and only benevolent, to mankind and are responsible for many of the 'goods' that humans enjoy. Plato's philosophical argument, that the gods are 'good' and only and always 'good' and are responsible only for the 'good', however much elaborated and adapted, prevails in the later philosophical tradition we have been studying. And this brings us back to two claims by the Platonic Socrates, in the *Euthyphro* (15a1–2) that 'there is nothing good for us which the gods do not give', and in the *Theaetetus* (151d1) that 'no god is ill intentioned (δύσνους) to human beings'.

In our discussion of the benevolence of the gods in the Platonic tradition we have thus far only touched upon one set of Platonic gods, that is, the gods as depicted by Homer, Hesiod, and the poetic tradition.[100] In the *Republic* especially (2.377c1–3.392a7) Plato chose to contrast his perfectly good, moral, just, and benevolent gods to the tales told about the gods by Hesiod, Homer, and other poets. In his writings he chose not to introduce similarly troublesome myths concerning specific cults of practised religion at Athens or elsewhere.[101] Plato clearly has in mind a pan-Hellenic audience. The poets he faults are predominately those (Hesiod, Homer, and Pindar) known throughout the Greek world, and so too would be the gods they depict. A discourse on the inappropriate and false myths about

[100] In the *Ion* (531c6–d2) Socrates offers a convenient summary of Homer's and other poets' topics concerning the gods: 'Does not Homer... tell how the gods associate (ὁμιλοῦσι) with one another and with humans, and about the happenings in the sky and those in Hades, and about the births of both gods and heroes? Are not these the things about which Homer has written?'

[101] The very few exceptions are a reference to Theseus' abduction of Helen (*Rep.* 3.391c8–d2) and two references to the gigantomachy on the *peplos* of Athena Polias (*Euthphr.* 6c2–4 and *Rep.* 2.378c3–4). In the *Euthyphro* Socrates mentions the *peplos* in the context of what he considers false accounts of the gods put forward by poets, painters, and, perhaps, embroiderers. For the gigantomachy on the *peplos*, see McPherran, 2000*a*: 95 and Barber, 1992, and for the myth of Theseus and Helen see Gantz, 1993: 288–91.

Athena Polias of Athens would have had little pan-Hellenic appeal or impact, but might, in fact, have opened Plato up to a charge of 'lack of respect' by his fellow citizens. To charge that Homer's Zeus so lacked 'sound thinking' that he was overcome by passion for Hera so as to have sexual intercourse with her in the most inappropriate circumstances (*Rep.* 3.390b6–c6) was one thing. To make the same charge against Hephaestus for his attempted rape of Athena on the Acropolis would have thrown into question a myth fundamental to Athenians' national image of their own origins.[102] And the danger may have been real. In the *Euthyphro* (6a7–c4) Socrates suggests that his questioning of the truth of the depictions of warring gods such as in the gigantomachy on the *peplos* of Athena might have led to the charge of 'lack of respect' against him.[103] If we return to the three types of god distinguished by the Greeks themselves in this period and discussed in the Introduction, that is, the gods of poets, of (state) cult, and of the philosophers,[104] we may see Plato quick to criticize the gods as described by the poets but reluctant to put the gods of cult under the philosophic microscope.

Did Plato intend that his criticisms of the Homeric gods affect the readers' views of the gods they worshipped? If we assume that the Greeks 'believed in' and worshipped in their local sanctuaries gods as described by Homer and Greek tragedy, that is, that they did not in their everyday lives distinguish between the gods of poets and those of cult, and if we take all the philosophical criticisms of these gods of Homer and tragedy and of the stories told of them as reflecting directly on the gods of popular religion, we will join the long tradition of those finding Plato and Greek philosophical thought in

[102] As we have seen, in the *Timaeus* (23d6–e2) and *Critias* (109b1–d2) Plato quietly refashions two Athenian national myths. He makes the allocation of Athens to Athena the result of 'the lots of justice', not of a contentious and contested chariot race to the Acropolis, and from the Athenian autochthony myth he removes Hephaestus' sexual assault of Athena. Antisthenes, who was only half-Athenian and hence initially not a citizen and was mocked for that, was little impressed by Athenian claims of autochthony: 'In disparaging the Athenians who took pride in being "earth-born", [Antisthenes] used to say that they were no "better born" (εὐγενεστέρους) than snails and locusts' (frag. V A 8 [G] = D.L. 6.1). On Antisthenes' citizen status, see Rankin, 1986: 2–9.

[103] The issue seems not to have been raised in the trial itself (McPherran, 1996: 141–4 and Brickhouse and Smith, 1989: 125–6).

[104] See pp. 16–19.

general explicitly hostile to Greek religion.[105] Both assumptions leading to this conclusion are, I think, erroneous. The gods of Homer, Hesiod, and the tragic poets on the one hand, and those of cult on the other, are in many ways distinct, but nonetheless I think that Plato, by correcting accounts of the one group, was attempting also indirectly to reform the other. Given the hazards of the enterprise of criticizing gods of cult, he chose two indirect approaches: (1) he faulted the Homeric and poetic descriptions of deities, criticism of whom was always fair game in the Greek tradition; and (2) he demonstrated the beneficial effects of having moral and just gods in the states he created in the *Republic* and *Laws*.[106] For the reader who is able to draw the conclusions that are implied but could not be expressed safely, Plato is not denying the existence of the gods or their concern for human beings, for both of which he argues extensively, or even of the many benefits they provide. He is rather attempting to remove false stories about them, stories that make them immoral, unjust, and irresponsible, stories originating in and propagated by poets who know not of what they write. In terms of the tripartite division of gods, Plato in his criticisms of 'Greek religion' is thus subtly and skilfully using his 'gods of philosophy' to fault much about the 'gods of poets', in part for educational and moral purposes, but also, I think, to correct, more by inference than by direct statement, mistaken views of the 'gods of cult'.

[105] Vlastos in his otherwise superb and highly influential essay on 'Socratic Piety' (1991: 157–78, repr. in Fine, 1999; Smith and Woodruff, 2000; and Kamtekar, 2005) makes this error, assuming that the gods of 'Greek religion' are, as his examples, the Heracles-tormenting Hera and the Hippolytus-punishing Aphrodite of Euripides' *Heracles* and *Hippolytus*. They are to him the 'gods of Greek religion', even the 'cult gods'. For him 'the gods in whom the city believes . . . have been lying since Homer'. The error is, as outlined in the Introduction, a confusion between gods of the poets and those of cult. Vlastos combines this with other strongly negative assessments of Greek religion, making prayer and sacrifice into 'magic' and treating the 'do ut des' principle in the most crude form.

[106] With one qualification, Gerson, 1990: 270 n. 99 gives a concise and accurate statement of Plato's position: 'It should be noted that a facile opposition of mythical, civic, and natural theology does not easily fit Plato's approach. For Plato is inclined sometimes to employ myth, as in the *Republic*, on behalf of a civic theology ultimately based on a natural theology.' The one qualification, and it is an important one, is that Plato employs *his own* myths, not those of the poets.

For Plato those who believe blasphemous and false stories about the gods have a 'lack of respect' for the gods; those who spread them are 'religiously incorrect'.[107] If these stories are banished, if the citizens of Plato's states have 'proper respect' and 'religious correctness' in this regard, then the gods of the Platonic tradition are depicted as totally benevolent towards mankind. They are aware of human activities, they hear humans' prayers and feel *charis* at humans' sacrifices and dedications, they are concerned for humans' welfare, and they bring to humans a multitude of benefits. In a most surprising way, the gods so described resemble closely the gods described in the best sources for practised religion, gods who also are aware of humans' activity, hear prayers, feel *charis* at sacrifices and dedications, and bring many 'good things' to humans. In the cultic tradition the 'bad' things in life, as in the Platonic tradition, are not caused by the gods.[108] Greek worshippers did not blame their losses, misfortunes, disasters, or their deaths on their gods who received proper worship and the honour due them. Rather, they faulted fortune (*τύχη*), a *daimon*, or themselves.[109] Thus far Plato's gods could be those of popular cult. What sets Plato's gods apart from the gods of popular belief, however, and what makes them distinctly Platonic is their concern for justice, not only for that part

[107] See pp. 145–6 and 158–9.

[108] If in the popular tradition, too, the gods are thought responsible only for good things and not for the bad, as I would argue, then Vlastos's argument (1991) that Socrates' claim that this was so was revolutionary and was in part responsible for his conviction in his trial for *ἀσέβεια* will not hold. On other issues involved here and other problems with Vlastos's theory, see Gocer, 2000.

[109] Parker, 1997: 155–6; Mikalson, 1983: 50 and 58–62. Parker contrasts the expectations of benevolence of the gods towards Athens found in the orators, city mythology, and comedy (and, I would add, philosophy) to the more complex views expressed in tragedy. Parker recognizes, however, that 'there is no surviving tragedy in which the cruelty of cruel gods is displayed against Athens itself, and it is hard to believe that such a tragedy ever existed. The gods' love for Athens is a sacred doctrine, beyond direct challenge even on the tragic stage' (p. 149). He adds, 'In many cases where the tragic gods appear harsh, they are none the less acting in accordance with principles that were wholly accepted in civil theology' (p. 151). But, he claims correctly, tragedy raises also questions about divine behaviour and morality that could never be broached in the context of public statements of civic theology. 'It is wrong', he concludes, 'to disregard the corrective to civic optimism that tragedy provides. Tragedy expresses some part of what it was like to believe in Greek gods no less than prose texts do' (p. 159).

of justice that concerns the gods ('proper respect' and 'religious correctness') which was equally a concern of popular religion, but also for that part of justice that involves other human beings. And not for just some parts of the latter, but for all of it. For Plato, of course, the gods in so promoting justice and punishing injustice in human affairs were also showing benevolence to humans because, in the Platonic vision, whatever humans might think at the moment, the practice of justice in both divine and human affairs led to the best life and the acquisition of 'the good things' here and hereafter, that is, it led to *eudaimonia*.

Appendix: Polling the Greeks and Their Philosophers

What 'all' Greeks believed

Anyone who studies Greek religion would give much to learn what 'all Greeks' or 'most Greeks' believed on pretty much any religious issue. How thrilling it would be to give a questionnaire to a representative sample of ancient Greeks, as anthropologists and sociologists can do for modern societies, to determine the nature and degree of acceptance of the religious beliefs we attribute to the ancient Greeks. We have no such luxury, of course, but, as an admittedly inadequate attempt—in terms of sample and scope—we do have what Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle occasionally say 'all' Greeks (*πάντες*), 'most' of them (*πλεῖστοι*), 'the many' of them (*οἱ πολλοί*), or 'many' (*πολλοί*) believed in religious matters. Sometimes these philosophers speak even of what 'all' human beings, Greeks and non-Greeks, believe. Such claims are sometimes employed as straw men to introduce the philosophers' own counterclaims, sometimes as support of their own views.[1] How these philosophers could know what all Greeks believed, and, if we grant they could have known, whether they were wanting to report it accurately, are, of course, questions that raise flags of caution, but what they do report has interest as contemporaries' views of the religion around them. Some such claims we have seen in the preceding chapters, and here we collect both those and others of a similar type. Because these philosophers unfortunately never treat systematically what they thought all or most Greeks believed and, in fact, mention it only very occasionally, the following survey lacks completeness and coherence, but is the best that our sample allows.

Aristotle in the *Politics* (1.1252b24–7) claims that 'all' say the gods are ruled by a king because they themselves, some still now and others in ancient times, were governed by kings, and just as humans liken the forms of gods to their own, so they liken the ways of life of the gods to their own. 'All' also assume that their gods live and are active (*ἐνεργεῖν*), that they do not sleep eternally like Endymion (*EN* 10.1178b18–20). Plato's Socrates in the

[1] On the use of *consensio omnium* as a philosophic argument, especially in the Epicurean and Stoic traditions, see Obbink, 1992*a*.

Republic (2.379c2–3) claims that 'the many' say the god is responsible for all things, good and bad. In the *Sophist* (265c1–d4) Plato's Elean stranger says it is the belief of 'the many' that all mortal creatures, plants, and inanimate objects come to be from nature, without any controlling divine plan or knowledge. Xenophon claims that 'the many' think the gods know some things but not others, while Socrates believed that gods know all that is said, done, or even planned in silence (*Mem.* 1.1.19).

In the *Laws* Plato's lawgiver states that no one who as a youth believed the gods do not exist ever continued to believe this into old age. Some, not 'many', believe that the gods exist but take no thought of human affairs, or that the gods do think of human affairs but are easily appeased by sacrifices and prayers (10.888b8–c7). Later in the *Laws* the lawgiver elaborates on this, claiming that only some part of humans do not believe in the gods at all,[2] and some think gods take no thought of them, but 'most', and they are the most wicked, have the opinion that, if the gods receive small sacrifices and fawnings, they help humans steal money and then free them from great punishments (12.948c2–7).

Aristotle (*Cael.* 270b5–8) claims that 'all' men have a conception about gods, and 'all' Greeks and non-Greeks who believe gods exist give the highest place, that is the heavens, to the divine.[3] Plato has Cleinias in the *Laws* (10.886a4–5) state that 'all' Greeks and non-Greeks believe that the earth, sun, stars, and other celestial bodies are gods. In Plato's *Apology* (26d1–3) Socrates asserts that he believes the sun and moon are gods, just as 'other humans do'. And, again in the *Laws*, the lawgiver complains that 'all' Greeks tell lies about the sun and moon, saying that they and some other stars with them do not always go on the same path (7.821b5–9). The lawgiver also claims that 'the many' think that those who engage in the study of astronomy are atheists (ἀθεούς) (12.966e4–967a3), a clear reference to Anaxagoras.[4]

Xenophon in his *Apology* (13) has Socrates say that 'all' think Apollo of Delphi foreknows the future and gives divinatory signs to whomever he wishes. In the *Republic* Socrates claims that 'for "all" human beings Apollo is the ancestral *exegete*, giving instructions on the establishment of sanctuaries, sacrifices, and other "services" to gods, *daimones*, and heroes, and on burials and "services" to the dead' (4.427b6–c4). In the *Cratylus* Socrates has, surprisingly, 'many' fear Apollo's name because of their inexperience with the correct interpretation of names. They fear the name indicates some 'destruction' (no doubt deriving it from ἀπολλύειν), a misconception

[2] Cf. *Lg.* 10.891b2–4.

[3] Cf. *Cael.* 284a11–13.

[4] On the need to qualify the claim that 'all' Greeks believed the sun and moon to be gods, and on Anaxagoras, see pp. 19–22.

which Socrates attempts to eliminate with alternative etymologies (404c5–406a3).[5] Apollo is, of course, the god par excellence of divination, but he was not the only such god. Xenophon has Hermocrates claim that Greeks and non-Greeks believe the gods know all things both present and future, and that 'all' cities and tribes through the mantic art ask the gods what they ought and ought not to do (*Apology* 47). 'The many' name birds, voices, chance meetings, and *manteis* as what give them signs, but Socrates called the agent '*daimonic*', speaking of the 'power of the gods' rather than attributing the power of divination to birds (*Apology* 13; cf. *Mem.* 1.1.4). For Aristotle, the fact that 'all' or 'many' people assume that dreams have some divinatory signs inclines one to believe it, but he cannot see the logical mechanism by which dreams could be divinatory (*Div. Somn.* 462b12–13).

Respect (σέβας) for the gods is the custom among 'all' human beings, the first of the unwritten laws that Xenophon has Socrates and Hippias discuss in the *Memorabilia*. These laws were created by the gods and are observed by 'all' peoples, and they include, after respect of the gods, honour of parents, forbiddance of incest between parents and their children, and, lastly, the return of a favour for a favour, that is, the observance of the *charis* relationship (4.14.19–25). According to the author of the *Rhetoric to Aristotle* (1423a33–5), 'all' have the opinion that it is unjust to transgress ancestral (religious) customs. In the *Laws* (10.887e2–5) the young see and hear at the risings and settings of the sun and moon the prostrations and acts of obeisance of 'all' Greeks and non-Greeks when they are in all kinds of misfortunes or successes.[6] Plutarch (*Mor.* 1102b) claimed that Epicurus hypocritically prayed and rendered obeisance to the gods so that he would not stir up the ill will of 'the many'. Plato's lawgiver created a new law to prevent 'the many' from their usual practice of erecting or promising sanctuaries in their homes, either in times of distress and success or when motivated by visions and dreams (*Lg.* 10.909d6–910a7). But the same lawgiver speaks favourably of the 'natural instinct' (τὸ σύμφυτον) that leads 'every' city to dedicate each of its geographical and political units to a god or hero (6.771b3–c1).

'All' ask the gods, says Xenophon's Hermocrates, 'to turn away things that are bad and to give those that are good' (*Smp.* 4.47). 'Every man', according to Alcibiades, would think himself capable of praying for what is best for himself' ([Pl.] *Alc.* 2.143b2–4). Timaeus claims that 'all' who have even a bit

[5] That Eros is agreed to be a great god by 'all' and is likewise thought by them to be 'soft and handsome' is, probably, only loosely related, if related at all, to cult religion (Pl. *Smp* 202b6–9 and 203c6–7).

[6] On the need to limit this statement, see p. 212 n. 16.

of 'sound thinking' always invoke a god at the beginning of every small or great undertaking (*Ti.* 27c1–3). Theages says he would pray to become a tyrant, 'and so would you, Socrates, and so would "all" other human beings' ([Pl.] *Thg.* 125e8–126a2).

In the *Phaedo* Plato has Cebes and Simmias contrast what 'the many' believe about death and the afterlife of the soul to Socrates' vision of them. '"All" the others', Simmias says, 'believe death to be one of the great evils' (68d5–6). Humans fear death (85a3–4).[7] In the *Cratylus* Socrates claims 'the many' seem to fear even the names Hades (403a5–8) and Pherrephate (404c5–d8). Cebes claims that humans believe that on the day when a person dies his soul is destroyed and perishes, departing immediately from the body and, scattered like wind or smoke, flies off and is no longer anything anywhere (*Phd.* 69e6–70a7). Cebes' brother Simmias attributes this belief to 'the many' (77b2–6).[8] By contrast Plato's lawgiver states that 'many'—not 'the many'—hear the account of those engaged in mystery rituals and are persuaded that murderers are punished in the afterlife and then again when they are reborn into life on earth (*Lg.* 9.870d5–e3).

Philosophers' priorities

With our limited and skewed sample we have tried to discover what some thought 'all' or 'most' Greeks believed in some religious matters, at least as reported by their philosophical contemporaries. We can also attempt to establish some priorities in religious matters. Our sample is here even more limited and skewed because we learn from the philosophers not what 'other' Greeks thought but how they themselves arranged their priorities. We also boldly assume, perhaps sometimes erroneously, that the sequence of listed items is indicative of the priorities or degrees of importance the author is intending to assign to the individual items. And, lastly, the evidence comes almost exclusively from Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle. The priorities philosophers give to religious matters might well be idiosyncratic, and that remains to be seen, but one priority is known to be widely prevalent in Greek culture, that 'the gods come first', and we find that shared by philosophers.[9]

Aristotle lists six 'functions' (ἔργα) that are absolutely necessary for the existence of a city state, and his ranking of them is an exception that points to the rule. In *Politics* 7.1328b5–15 he gives, in what seems a descending order of importance,[10] the six elements: first, food; second, the crafts by

[7] Cf. Pl. *Ap.* 29a7–b1.
[8] Cf. *Phd.* 80d5–e1.
[9] On the 'priority of the gods' in Greek religion, see Mikalson, 1983: 13–17.
[10] Note, however, that the sixth element is termed the 'most necessary'.

which tools are made; third, weapons; and fourth, a supply of money. Fifth, '*but also first*' (*πέμπτον δὲ καὶ πρῶτον*) is attendance to divine matters (*τὴν περὶ τὸ θεῖον ἐπιμέλειαν*), which 'they also call "priestly service" (*ἱερατεία*)'.[11] Sixth is 'decision making' about what is beneficial and just. Here, uniquely I think, 'the divine' is far down the list of things necessary—not just in a city but in any human endeavour—but Aristotle (or an editor?) clearly was uncomfortable with its fifth position and so, with 'but also first', acknowledged its traditional position. Aristotle reflects the more conventional priority of the gods when describing the town planner Hippodamus' division of land into three parts: the sacred, public, and private, in that order. The sacred is that from which (that is, from the revenues of which) the citizens will make and do conventional things (*τὰ νομιζόμενα ποιήσουσι*) regarding gods (*Pol.* 2.1267b33–35).[12] Aristotle also approved of how the Cretans managed public property and revenues, with one part of them, the first part listed, 'for the gods' (2.1272a17–19). For Aristotle gods and religion were not only an essential part of the city state, but usually receive first consideration. So, too, Plato in the *Laws* has the lawgiver, in the division of the land of the new colony, *first* select land for the sanctuaries and agora of the gods and *daimones*. Among the deities he first establishes in each of the twelve villages are first Hestia, then the Acropolis gods Zeus and Athena, then the deity that is to be the patron of the village (8.848c8–d7). Two priorities are reflected here: the gods' share comes first in land division, and secondly, among the gods, Hestia is first, maintaining her usual priority in Greek practised religion,[13] and she is followed by the polis gods, then the local gods.

In describing the political divisions of the new colony, Plato's lawgiver again gives first the religious arrangements, altars and what pertains to them (that is, sanctuaries), and festivals with their sacrifices. The reasons these things are established are *first* because of the *charis* of the gods and things concerning the gods, and *second* to promote familiarity among the citizens (*Lg.* 6.771d1–e1). So, too, with the establishment of criminal law. First come those laws concerning crimes against the gods, then those against the state (9.856b1 and 864c10–d3).

In the *Oeconomicus* (5.19–6.1) Xenophon has Socrates and Critobulus agree that one should 'begin every task with gods', and this involves 'pleasing' the gods, using divination, and, more generally, 'serving' the gods. So,

[11] The *ἐπιμέλεια περὶ τὸ θεῖον* requires the presence of priests (7.1328b22) who, then, are naturally in Aristotle's system of classification *ἐπιμέλεται* (4.1299a14–16). On this see pp. 101–2.

[12] Cf. *Pol.* 7.1330a8–13 and 1331b17–18.

[13] On the precedence of Hestia, see Nilsson, 1967: 337–8.

too, as we have seen, Timaeus assumes that all reasonable people begin every undertaking with a prayer to the gods (*Ti.* 27c1–3). In the *Laws* the priority of the gods extends even to small details of administrative duties. The *agoranomoi*, for example, officials in charge of the agora, are first to examine any crimes against the sanctuaries in the agora and only then turn their attention to profane matters (8.849a3–7). In matters where there were both religious and secular components, the philosophers, like their contemporaries, gave priority to the gods and the divine.

Plato's lawgiver once (*Lg.* 4.717a6–718b6) ranks those who deserve honour: (1) Olympian and city-upholding gods, (2) chthonic gods, (3) *daimones*, (4) heroes, (5) ancestral deities with private rites (probably gods worshipped in a family context), (6) living parents, and, last, (7) dead parents.[14] He gives a similar ranking in 4.724a1–2: (1) gods, (2) 'those after gods' (*daimones* and heroes), (3) living parents, and (4) dead parents.[15] The 'homeland', too, may be described as a goddess, and in the rankings of those deserving honour ranks above the parents. The lawgiver claims the citizens must 'serve' their homeland, a goddess, more than children do their mothers, and they should think about the homeland as they do about the local gods and *daimones* (5.740a5–b1). In their dramatic address to Socrates in the *Crito* (51a7–b3), the laws of the city do not expressly call the homeland a goddess, but speak of her in religiously charged language[16] and claim she must be more highly honoured and respected than a father or a mother. And so, presumably, if one wishes to fit the homeland into the ranking, it would fall between the lowest gods and the living parents. For Plato the soul was immortal and divine, and the lawgiver claims that it is necessary to honour one's own soul in second place, after the gods and 'the ones that attend the gods', that is, the *daimones* (5.726a6–727a2).[17]

For both the homeland and the soul Plato has to assert their divinity as if this was not a commonly accepted concept. Neither the homeland nor the soul is given cult either by Plato or in practised religion, and the *daimones*, in this context, are idiosyncratically Platonic. If we leave these 'divinities' out of the rankings, we have the following priority list:

1. Olympian and city-upholding gods
2. Chthonic gods

[14] Among the Olympian and city-upholding gods of Magnesia, Hestia has precedence, then Zeus and Athena (Pl. *Lg.* 5.745b7–8 and 8.848c8–d7).

[15] The Stoics, too, approved of honouring parents and brothers in second place after the gods (D.L. 7.120).

[16] *τιμιώτερον*, *σεμνότερον*, *ἁγιώτερον*, and *σέβεσθαι*.

[17] Cf. 5.726a2–3, 727b3–4, and 728a8–b2.

3. Heroes
4. Traditional family deities
5. Living parents
6. Dead parents

Such a ranking has some interest in abstract terms, and when we find two or more of these types deserving honour listed together, they usually come in this order, with, for example, gods before heroes, gods before living parents, and living parents before dead ones. This ranking often structures descriptions of religious matters in Plato and elsewhere, but to the more practical concerns of practised religion the ranking has little relevance. There the relative importance of the types of deities varies and changes depending on the immediate need of the worshipper. If, for example, the state is threatened by war, he would look to the city-upholding deities. If his personal health is endangered, then a physician-hero would assume the greatest importance. The function, not the 'rank', of the god would be the decisive factor.

Two separate sets of priorities are suggested by the lawgiver's claim in *Laws* 4.716d6–e2: 'For the good man to sacrifice and to associate always with the gods by sacrifices, prayers, dedications, and all "service" to the gods is the finest, best, and most useful thing for the *eudaimon* life.' The sequence sacrifices, prayers, and dedications is to be found elsewhere,[18] and in the more common pairing of sacrifice and prayer, sacrifice is almost always given priority.[19] All this might suggest that sacrifice is the most important component of 'service' to the gods. We may also have for sacrifice itself a priority listing of its purposes in Theophrastus' statement that 'one must sacrifice to the gods for three purposes: because of honour, because of *charis*, or because of one's need for good things' (frag. 12.42–4 [Pötscher]). The second priority suggested in *Laws* 4.716d6–e2 is that of the good man over the evil man in obtaining the benefits of 'service' to the gods. This is, in the philosophical tradition, usually linked with another question of priorities, expensive or inexpensive offerings to the deities. The upshot of this is, as we have seen in Chapter 2, that despite the common assumption that bigger and more expensive offerings are better, for Plato, Xenophon, their Socrateses, and for Theopompus and Theophrastus smaller offerings given by morally good and 'properly respectful' individuals are more pleasing to the gods than larger ones given by the wicked and 'not properly respectful'.

Those who 'serve' the gods are 'dear' to them, but who are 'most dear'? Plato has Glaucon, in his perverse argument on the advantages of being

[18] *Rep.* 2.362c1–2 and 365e3–4.
[19] On this see p. 55.

unjust, claim that the unjust man is 'more dear' to the gods because he can give them grander sacrifices and dedications (*Rep.* 2.362c1–8). Xenophon, oddly, has Socrates claim that those men are 'best and most dear' to the gods who 'do well' farming, medicine, and political matters (*Mem.* 3.9.15). Aristotle considers the wise man 'most dear' to the gods and most *eudaimon* (*EN* 10.1179a24–32),[20] and by the wise man he meant the philosopher, not the farmer, physician, or politician.

To Xenophon's Socrates, if one properly honours the gods, he may 'be confident and expect the greatest good things' (*Mem.* 4.3.17). For Aristotle, gods, like parents, have done for humans 'the greatest things' (*EN* 8.1162a4–6). In the preceding chapters, and especially in Chapter 6, we have seen the many benefits gods confer on those who 'properly respect' them, but what, in the view of the philosophers, is the 'greatest' benefit? In Chapter 6, we saw, from Plato, *Laws* 1.631b2–d6, a list of 'all the goods', divided into human and divine and prioritized. The human ones are, in order, health, beauty, strength in running and other physical activities, and wealth that follows reason. First among the divine goods is reason (*φρόνησις*), then a 'sound thought' condition of the soul, then justice, then courage.[21] At the top of the list of human goods is health, of divine goods, reason. Along the same lines, for Timaeus, 'no greater gift than philosophy' has ever been or will ever be given from the gods to the mortal race (*Ti.* 47a7–b2).

For Theophrastus, as he argues for the need to sacrifice plants, not animals, 'the finest and most valuable things the gods create for us are the fruits of the earth' (frag. 7.8–9 [Pötscher]).[22] Plato's Socrates claims that the 'greatest of the good things' come to us through god-given 'madness', and his first example of that is the prophecy of the Delphic Oracle and other oracles and inspired mantic art in general (*Phdr.* 244a6–d5). That Plato can have one credible speaker (the lawgiver of the *Laws*) assert that the 'greatest good' is reason, and another (Socrates) claim 'madness' reveals that the flow of the discussion may lead him to quite different conclusions at different times, but it remains interesting that the two goods that both earn the title 'greatest' are those that figure prominently throughout his writings, reason and divination.

In *Laws* 3.699d7–701c4 Plato's lawgiver gives an ascending list of inappropriate and dangerous freedoms in a society, all initiated, in his view, by the

[20] For the reasoning leading to this conclusion, see pp. 179–80.

[21] For the ultimate dependence of the possession of the human goods on possession of the divine goods, see pp. 219–20.

[22] Xenophon's Socrates, by contrast, thinks animals are of more use to humans than plants (*Mem.* 4.3.10).

freedom to mix and innovate with the musical genres. Next is the freedom not to obey rulers, then not to heed parents and elders, and, the most extreme (*πρὸς αὐτῷ . . . τῷ τέλει*), 'to take no thought of' (*μὴ φροντίζειν*) oaths,[23] pledges, and gods in general.[24] The lawgiver comes to a similar ranking when he lists 'lacks of restraints' or *hybris* of the young that must be addressed by the laws (10.884a1–885b4). The greatest of such crimes, by word or deed, are against sacred property,[25] and of these the worst are against that of the whole people (*δημόσια*), the second worst against that of tribes and other such divisions of the whole people. Following these are those against private sacred property or tombs, then those against parents. Fifth are those against rulers, sixth and last are those against the political status of individual citizens. The same order of 3.699d7–710c4, that is, gods, parents, and state, is maintained but with more detail.

Three causes of 'lack of respect' (*ἀσέβεια*) of the gods are, according to the lawgiver, mistaken beliefs about the gods, always given in the same order but not explicitly ranked. The mistaken beliefs are that (1) the gods do not exist, (2) gods have no concern for humans, and (3) gods can be persuaded by prayers and gifts to forgive injustice. Those who hold these beliefs, however, can be divided into two groups, those who are of a good, moral nature and need only (compulsory) re-education, and, the worst, those who cannot control their pleasures, have good memories and sharp wits, and, as *manteis*, magicians, demagogues, tyrants, and sophists, hypocritically manipulate beliefs to harm their fellow citizens. This last group deserves a lifelong prison term in solitary confinement and, when they die, their bodies should be removed from the country and left unburied (10.907d4–909d6).

To these more wide-ranging rankings of 'lack of respect' of the gods we may add some isolated examples of 'religious incorrectness'. Incest is 'by no means "religiously correct" ', is god-hated, and is the 'most shameful of the shameful things' (8.838b10–c1). The affairs of *xenoi* and crimes against them are more watched over and punished by the gods than those concerning citizens 'because the *xenos*, lacking comrades and kinsmen, is more pitied by both men and gods' (5.729e2–6). Among both *xenoi* and locals a crime against suppliants is the 'greatest'. The suppliant has the god he supplicated as a witness to agreements made, and this god becomes a special protector of

[23] For oaths linked with 'proper respect' for the gods, see pp. 155–7. The perjuror in *Lg.* 11.916e6–917a2 runs the risk of becoming 'most hateful' to the gods.

[24] For this same priority, in terms of crimes but not of freedoms, see *Lg.* 9.854e1–5.

[25] By *ἱερά* here is probably meant both sanctuaries and the sacred property in them. The lawgiver's first example following this discussion is *hierosylia*, the stealing of sacred property (10.885a7–b2).

the suppliant who has suffered so that he will not suffer unavenged (5.730a4–9). And, finally, for the maltreatment of orphans the perpetrator should fear first the gods who perceive the isolation of orphans and second the souls of the dead who are naturally exceptionally concerned for their own descendants (11.926e9–927b4).

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Index of passages cited

AESCHINES
1.95: 151
2.117: 189
3.91: 151

AESCHINES OF SPHETTOS
fragments, [G] VI A
50.46–50: 176

AESCHYLUS
Choephoroi 306–478: 61
Eumenides 616–18: 111
Septem 1010: 151

ANAXAGORAS
fragments, *VS* 59
A1 and 35: 21

ANDOCIDES
1.19 and 23: 151

ANTIPHON
1.5: 140
1.25: 150, 189, 192
5.8 and 14: 151
5.82: 150
5.91: 151
6.2 and 10: 151
6.33: 140, 157
6.48: 140, 151, 157
Tetralogies
1.2.2: 151, 189
2.3.3: 151
3.2.2: 151
3.2.9: 189
fragments, *VS* 87
B57: 83

ANTISTHENES
fragments, [G] V A
8: 238
41.52: 189
176: 189
178: 107
181: 97
182: 107

ARISTIPPUS
fragments, [Mannebach]
227: 47

ARISTOPHANES
Aves
848–903: 107
Lysistrata
743: 11
Nubes
602: 221
615–19: 85
Pax
399: 96
409–13: 20
Thesmophoriazousae
128: 96

ARISTOTLE
[*Athenaion Politeia*]
55.3: 21
De Caelo
270b5–8: 243
284a11–14: 243
De Divinatione per Somnia
462b12–23: 122–3, 244
464a20–2: 123

[*De Mundo*]
400b21: 84
400b23: 32

Eudemean Ethics
1.1214a1–8: 98
1.1214a23–4: 126
7.1238b26–30: 181–2
7.1242a32–5: 37, 182
7.1242b19–20: 161
7.1243b11–14: 39
8.1247a22–3: 183
8.1248a30–b3: 122, 130
8.1249b16–21: 180, 198

Eudemus
fragments, [Rose]
44: 66, 146

[*Magna Moralia*]
2.1208b27–32: 181–2

Metaphysics
1.982b29–983a5: 214
12.1074b3–5: 233

Nicomachean Ethics
1.1095a14–20: 8
1.1095a18–25: 8, 41
1.1095b14–17: 41
1.1096a14–17: 152
1.1097a34–b21: 8
1.1098b12–14: 161
1.1099a31–b3: 161
1.1099b11–13: 208
4.1122a2–7: 10, 166
4.1122b19–23: 94–5
4.1123a4–5: 95
4.1123b17–21: 161
4.1127b12–21: 130
4.1128b10–12: 173
5.1129b3–6: 47
5.1133a3–5: 14–15
5.1134b20–4: 57
7.1152b6–7: 41
7.1153b14–15: 41
8.1149a4–8: 181–2
8.1158b33–1159a8: 35, 181–2
8.1160a23–8: 80, 165
8.1162a4–7: 37, 182, 249
8.1163b3–8: 35, 161
8.1163b13–18: 37, 39, 62, 78, 163
9.1164b2–6: 37, 39, 62
9.1165a24–7: 37, 39, 164
9.1165b5–6: 152
10.1176a31–b2: 8
10.1176b5–6: 8
10.1177b26–1178a2: 198
10.1178b8–12: 197
10.1178b18–20: 242
10.1178b25–7: 198
10.1178b33–1179a16: 8
10.1179a29–32: 180, 182
10.1179a23–32: 198, 249

On Philosophy
fragments, [Rose]
10: 230, 235
11: 235
12: 234–5
14: 133

fragments, [Ross]
3: 97
12: 122

Politics
1.1252b24–7: 34, 242
1.1253a34–7: 152
1.1254b33–6: 96
1.1262a25–8: 149–50
2.1267b33–5: 246
2.1272a17–19: 246
3.1281a40–b10: 93
3.1285b9–17: 103
4. 1299a15–19: 102, 246
5.1309a14–20: 94

5.1310b33–6: 35, 161
5.1311a5–7: 35
5.1313b19–25: 96
6.1319b24–7: 133
6.1320b2–4: 94
6.1321a35–40: 81, 95–6
6.1322b18–29: 102, 107
6.1322b26–9: 103–4
6.1323a1–3: 86, 107
7.1328b5–15: 102, 104, 245–6
7.1328b22: 246
7.1329a27–34: 102
7.1329a31–2: 31
7.1330a8–13: 1, 246
7.1331a24–30: 132–3
7.1331a24–8: 119, 132
7.1331b4–6: 102
7.1331b17–18: 1, 246
7.1335b15–16: 31
7.1335b22–6: 148
7.1336b12–17: 101
7.1336b14–23: 164
7.1336b20–3: 93
8.1342a18–28: 86, 93

Protrepticus
fragments, [Ross]
12: 86

Rhetoric
1.1374a4–5: 10
1.1377a19–29: 156
2.1380b2–5: 85
2.1399a8–10: 162
2.1399a22–6: 201

[*Rhetoric to Alexander*]
1423a30–1424a8: 81–3
1423a33–5: 244
1423b16–18: 163
1432a34–b4: 156

Topics
1.105a3–7: 160, 172
2.112a36–8: 26

ARISTOXENUS
fragments, [Wehrli]
29a: 69

BION
fragments, [K]
29: 46, 177
33: 99, 167

CHRYSIPPUS
fragments, *SVF*
1.554: 8
2.197: 156
2.703: 234
2.939: 111
2.1011–12: 236
2.1019: 211
2.1103–4: 26
2.1115: 218
2.1125: 204
2.1152–4: 218
2.1175–6: 204
2.1189: 111
2.1191: 111
2.1192: 111, 138
2.1206: 111
2.1214: 111
3.4: 26
3.326: 204

CICERO
De Divinatione
1.3.5–6: 110–11, 124
1.50.113: 124
2.4.100: 110–11
2.48.100: 124

De Legibus
2.18.45: 99

De Natura Deorum
1.13.35: 22
3.7.16: 229

CLEANTHES
fragments, *SVF*
1.500: 159
1.516: 218
1.527: 50
1.528: 229
1.529: 236
1.537: 219, 234
1.554: 8
1.558: 203
1.581: 156

CRITIAS
fragments, *VS* 88
B25: 233

DEMETRIUS OF PHALERON
fragments, *FGrHist* 228
25: 94

DEMOCRITUS
fragments, *VS* 68
A74: 124
A75: 233–4
A77: 124
A78: 124, 236
A79: 124
A136–7: 124
A138: 111
B217: 198
B142: 124
B166: 111, 124, 236
B175: 234
B195: 97
B230: 83
B234: 47

DEMOSTHENES
8.8: 151
9.16: 157
18.7 and 217: 157
19.70: 140
19.156: 151
21.227: 189
23.25, 29, and 38: 140
23.68: 151
23.78: 140
23.96: 157
24.9: 11
24.34: 157
24.120: 11
24.122: 10
25.26: 60
25.48: 151
29.39: 151
33.10: 151
48.52: 157
53.3: 151
57.17: 157
57.58: 151

DIAGORAS OF MELOS
fragments, [WI]
T36: 101
T57: 156

DINARCHUS
1.86: 151

DIOGENES
fragments, [G] V B
2: 111
132: 150
327: 124
335: 193
342: 101
343: 46, 80
345: 47, 58
350: 47
353: 167, 188
375: 124, 130
462: 109, 167
487: 93

DIOGENES LAERTIUS
2.12–14: 21
2.35: 122
2.40 and 56: 114
3.83: 190
5.6: 111
5.16: 15, 101
5.22: 47
6.37 and 72: 180
7.119: 31
7.120: 247
8.8: 86
8.9: 49
8.12: 69
8.33–4: 66
8.53: 70
10.96: 234
10.100–4: 234
10.120: 97
10.123: 159
10.134: 53
10.139: 44
10.142–3: 234

DIODORUS SICULUS
10.9.1–2: 156
10.9.6: 65
10.9.7: 49
10.9.8: 48, 176

EMPEDOCLES
fragments, *VS* 31
A11: 70
B128: 41, 69–70
B136–7: 69

EPICURUS
fragments, [Usener]
30: 59
56: 58
342: 22, 236
352: 236
353: 124
364–5: 44
386: 161, 182
388: 44
395: 111
593: 85

EUHEMERUS
fragments, [W]
23, 25, 27, 56–69B: 232

EURIPIDES
Bacchae 82: 30
Cyclops 125: 151
Electra 744: 30
Helena 1021: 140
Hercules Furens 344–7: 207
Ion
111 and 187: 30
881–922: 207
1187–95: 60
1609–22: 207
Iphigenia Taurica 1105: 30
Supplices 39–40: 150
Troades 820–59: 207
fragments, [N]
388: 140
948: 14
1007c: 233

HERMARCHUS
fragments, [Auricchio]
34: 58
48: 51

GORGIAS
fragments, *VS* 82
B6: 37, 148

HERACLIDES
fragments, [Wehrli]
88: 86

HERACLITUS
fragments, *VS* 22

B5: 96
B15: 91–2
B69: 66
B119: 23

HERODOTUS
1.65: 136, 228
1.90.2–91.6: 207
1.131: 20, 212
2.37.2: 30
2.53: 213

HESIOD
Works and Days
121–6: 23
135: 30
336: 62, 154
339: 212

[HIPPOCRATES]
De Aera, Aquis, Locis
40–50: 61
De Morbo Sacro
3.16–4.16: 158
4.48–54: 218

HOMER
Iliad
1.34–42: 14
5.593: 69
6.266–8: 66
8.161–2: 88
9.363: 122
9.497–501: 45
12.310–12: 88
18.535: 69
Odyssey
3.436–63: 74
17.383–4: 129

HYPERIDES
6.22: 150

ISAEUS
7.38: 12
9.34: 151

ISOCRATES
1.13: 157
11.24: 30
14.2: 151
15.76 and 284: 189

JULIAN
Oratio 6.199a: 119

LYCURGUS
Against Leocrates
15: 37, 141
34: 151
65: 10
76: 157
136: 10
139–40: 94

LYSIAS
12.24: 140
13.3: 189, 192
6.51: 30

MELISSUS OF SAMOS
fragments, *VS* 30
A1: 209

PAUSANIAS
8.1.5–6: 74
10.14.5–6: 100

PERSAEUS
fragments, *SVF*
1.448: 231

PHILODEMUS
On Piety [O]
225–31: 124
740–50: 45

765–70: 95
790–810: 94
820–40: 156
879–84: 58
910–12: 97
1451–61: 156
1787–91: 94

PHILOSOTRATUS
Life of Apollonius
1.1: 70, 111, 179

PLATO
[*Alcibiades 1*]
103a–b: 116
105e–106a: 116
116b: 8
121e–122a: 32
122c: 33
124a–b: 97
124c: 116
127e: 116
129a: 97
131b: 12
132c–d: 97
134a–e: 8
134d: 187–8, 201

[*Alcibiades 2*]
138b–c: 48
141c–d2: 48
143a: 48
143b: 244
148b–d: 49
148e–149c: 49, 177
148e–149a: 61
148e: 55, 95–6
149c–150b: 46
149c: 60–1, 96
149e–150a: 96, 98, 189, 193–4, 197
149e: 55, 189
150a–b: 197–8
150a: 60
150b: 49–50
150c: 61

[*Amatores*]
138a: 12

Apology
20e–22e: 117
21b: 117–18, 122
22b–c: 126
22c: 125
22d: 117
23a: 117
23b–c: 9
23b–c: 118
24a: 118
24b–c: 194
24c: 114
26b: 114, 195
26d: 21, 243
26e–28a: 25
27c–d: 25
27c: 26, 114
27d–28a: 23
28d–29a: 117
28e: 116–17
29a–b: 245
29a: 118, 230
29b: 118
29d: 118
30a: 9, 31, 117–18
30d–31b: 119
31d: 115–16
32a–c: 155
32d: 189
33c: 116–17, 120–1
35c–d: 155–7
35d: 195
37e5–38a: 118
39c–d: 125
40a–c: 116, 128
40a–b: 115

41c–42d: 116
41c–42a: 128
41c–d: 199
41d: 215

Charmides
156b–c: 33
157a–b: 33
159b: 12
160e: 12
161a–b:12
163e: 12
164d–165a: 97
164d–e: 12
169b: 125
172a: 8, 12
173c: 127, 129
173d: 8
173e–174a: 127
174b–c: 8

[*Clitophon*]
407d: 201

Cratylus
394e: 185
396d–397a: 105, 125
397b: 47
397c–398c: 23
397c–d: 19–20, 210, 212, 235
397d–398c4: 24
400d–408d: 211
400e1–401a: 43
403a: 245
404c–406a: 243–4
404c–d: 245
404e–405b: 220
405a–b: 135
411b: 125
428c: 125
438c: 23

Critias
106a–b: 51
108c–d: 51
109b–d: 224, 238
109b: 34
109c–d: 227, 230
112e–121c5: 225
113e–114a: 136, 195
113e: 230
114e: 225
116d–e: 99
119c–d: 136, 195
119d–120c: 196
119d–e: 56
119e: 54
120c–d: 227
121a–c: 226–7

Crito
43d–44b: 122
51a–b: 247
51c: 149
54b–d: 202
54b: 189
54e: 116

[*Definitions*]
412e–413a: 31, 143, 162

Epistulae
7.331b: 12
8.352e–353a: 51
8.356b: 10, 32
8.356c–d: 103
8.357a: 102

[*Epinomis*]
975c: 127
976e–977a: 20
980b–c: 57
981d–984b: 20
983e–984b: 19
984d–985d: 27
984d: 20
985c–d: 132
985d–988a: 20

988a: 213
990a–992e: 20

Euthydemus
272e: 115
273e–274a: 41
273e: 11
280b–e2: 8
283e: 150
302b–d: 221
302d: 34

Euthyphro
3b–c: 128
3b: 25, 114–15
3c–d: 195
3c: 128–9
3e: 128
4a–b2: 128
4c: 12
4c–d: 108
4d–e: 149
4e–5c: 128
5c–d: 142
5d–e: 167
5d: 10
5e: 209
5e–6c: 214
6a–c: 238
6b–c: 92, 209
6c: 237
7b–9e: 185
9a: 108
9b: 128, 201
10a: 185
10e: 185
11e–12a: 143
12a–d3: 190
12a: 128
12c: 143
12e: 6, 9, 29, 31, 190, 196
13b–d: 31
13b: 30, 140
13d: 9, 30
13e: 128
14b: 30, 43, 55–6, 141, 170–1, 176–8
14c–d: 55
14c: 43, 55, 104
14d–e: 30
14d: 128
14e: 30, 39
15a: 30, 35, 161, 178, 237
15b: 30
15d–16a: 128
16a: 114

Gorgias
447a: 83
451e: 219
452b: 219
464b–c: 33
470d–471d: 202
472a–b: 95
478c: 8
479b–c: 189
494e: 8
501a: 33
505b: 142
506e–507e: 12
507a–b: 174, 192
507b–c: 142
507c: 8
507d–e: 188, 197
516e: 33
517e: 33
522c–d: 190
523a–b: 188, 201–2
525c–d: 202

[*Hipparchus*]
228b–c: 95

[*Hippias Major*]
292a: 125

293a–b: 23
293a: 60
304b–d: 116

Ion
531c–d: 237
531c: 43
533e–535a: 221
534c–d: 9, 32, 126
534d: 125
536a–d: 221
542a–b: 221

Laches
195e–196a: 127, 177
198e–199a: 129
198e: 9, 41
199d–e: 43, 144, 192
199d: 142
216d: 125

Laws
1.621b–d: 219
1.624a–625a: 228
1.624a: 136, 228
1.631b–d: 219, 228, 249
1.631c–d: 142
1.632d: 228
1.633c: 33
1.634a: 228
1.637a–b: 89
1.642d–e: 57
1.645d–646a: 90
1.649a–b: 90
2.653a–654a: 88, 220–1
2.653c–d: 83
2.657d–e: 92
2.657d: 86
2.658c–d: 93
2.658e–659c: 92–3
2.661a–662a: 219
2.661d–e: 8
2.662c–663d: 199
2.662c: 136, 228
2.663a–b: 189
2.663b: 151, 189
2.663d: 189
2.664c–666d: 91
2.664c–665b: 220–1
2.665a–b: 221
2.665a–b: 83, 90
2.666a–c: 221, 230
2.670d–e: 90
2.671a–672d: 90
2.671b: 90
2.672a–d: 221, 230
2.672c–d: 88, 220–1
2.673e–674c: 91
3.679a–b: 221
3.681a–c: 213
3.684c: 33
3.685b–686b: 136
3.686e: 8
3.687e: 50
3.688b–c: 50
3.691d–692b: 228
3.691d–e: 136
3.696a–b: 136, 228
3.697a–c: 219
3.699d–701c: 249–50
3.701c: 156
4.712b: 11, 41, 51–2
4.713c–714a: 222, 224
4.713e–714a: 228
4.713a: 222
4.713c–e: 25
4.713e: 215, 222
4.715c: 9, 31, 103
4.716a–718b: 247
4.716c–d: 188–9, 197
4.716c: 197

4.716d–717a: 145
4.716d–e: 41, 43, 51, 65, 81, 95, 248
4.716d: 32, 55
4.716e–717a: 65, 96
4.717a–718a: 153, 170–1
4.717a–d: 148–9
4.717a–b: 37, 160
4.717a: 153, 177, 221
4.717b–d: 37–8
4.717b: 23, 133, 174
4.717d–718a: 135
4.720a: 33
4.720d: 33
4.721b–c: 147
4.723e: 36–7
4.724a: 36, 247
5.726a–727c: 33, 164, 247
5.726a: 247, 161
5.727b: 247
5.728a–b: 164, 247
5.729c: 164, 176, 181
5.729d–e: 87
5.729e–730a: 157
5.729e: 250
5.730a: 23, 251
5.732c: 23
5.735b: 33
5.738b–c: 57, 96
5.738b–d: 58, 122, 132
5.738d–e: 79–80
5.738d: 23
5.740a–b: 23, 32, 247
5.740a: 33, 36
5.740b–c: 9, 31, 36, 103
5.740c: 33
5.741b–c: 104
5.741c: 54, 80
5.741e–742a: 99
5.742b–c: 54
5.745a: 221
5.745b: 247
5.745d–e: 79
6:752d: 12
6.753b–c: 195
6.755d–e: 195
6.757e: 53, 197
6.758d–760a: 107
6.759a–d: 102
6.759b–c: 179
6.759c–e: 105, 108
6.759e–760a: 108
6.762e: 34
6.764b: 107
6.767d: 189
6.771a–c: 79
6.771b–c: 244
6.771d–e: 79–80, 246
6.771d: 179
6.772b–d: 135
6.772c–d: 58
6.773e–774e: 103
6.773e–774a: 9, 31, 36
6.774a–e: 108, 148
6.774e–775a: 109, 147
6.775b: 91
6.776a–b: 31
6.776b: 9, 103
6.778c: 132
6.782c–d: 67–8, 70
6.784a–b: 80
7.792d: 11, 41
7.796b–c: 88–9, 165, 221
7.796c: 179
7.796e: 220–1
7.799a–b: 80
7.799a: 23
7.799b: 104
7.800a–b: 104
7.800b–d: 60, 103
7.800c: 104
7.800e: 61

7.801a–e: 53
7.801a: 43
7.801b: 99
7.801e: 23
7.803e–804b: 41
7.803e: 85, 177
7.804a–b: 84–5, 134
7.808a: 33
7.809d: 85, 165
7.812b–c: 91
7.812e–813a: 84, 88
7.815d–e: 89
7.815d: 22, 165
7.816c–d: 84
7.816d: 8
7.818c: 23
7.820e–822d: 19, 210, 236
7.821b–d: 19, 60, 235
7.821b: 243
7.821c–d: 20, 154
7.821d: 55, 60
8.828a–d: 57
8.828a–b: 79, 104–5, 109, 134, 176–7
8.828a: 134
8.828b–d: 79
8.828b: 23, 104, 130
8.828c: 87
8.828d–829a: 8
8.829b–c: 87–8
8.832e–833c: 87
8.834e–835a: 84
8.835b–c: 84
8.838a–c: 136
8.838a–b: 148, 184
8.838b–d: 148
8.838b: 201
8.838b–c: 250
8.838d–839c: 147
8.838d–e: 195
8.839c: 195
8.840c: 148, 195
8.840d–e: 147
8.840d: 189
8.841c: 148
8.841d: 80, 147–8
8.842e–843a: 157, 194, 221
8.844b–c: 221
8.844d–e: 221
8.844d: 230
8.845e: 108
8.848c–d: 164, 246–7
8.848d: 23
8.849a: 107, 247
9.853c: 23
9.853d–855a: 166
9.854a–b: 10
9.854b–855a: 166
9.854c: 166
9.854d–856a: 194
9.854d: 175
9.854e: 250
9.856a: 195
9.856b: 246
9.857a: 166
9.857b: 10
9.861d: 152
9.864c–d: 246
9.864d: 10, 166, 175
9.865a–b: 136
9.865b: 33
9.865d: 108
9.869b: 10, 166
9.869c–d: 100
9.870d–e: 245
9.871b–d: 136
9.871b: 54, 184
9.871c–d: 105, 108, 130
9.872d–873c: 149

9.873b: 12
9.873d: 108, 136
9.874a: 12
9.874c: 152
9.877a–b: 22
9.877d–e: 104, 144
9.878a: 9, 11, 32, 36, 52, 103, 176
9.879c: 184, 201
9.879e: 157
9.880e–881b: 149, 184
9.881a: 149
10.884a–885b: 250
10.885a–b: 250
10.885b: 46, 55, 215
10.885d–e: 130
10.885e–886a: 19, 210, 235
10.886a: 19, 216, 243
10.886c: 33, 37
10.886d–e: 19, 215–16, 235
10.886e–887a: 158–9
10.887b–c: 197
10.887c–e7: 211–13
10.887d–e: 51, 81
10.887e: 43, 244
10.888b–c: 243
10.888c–d: 159
10.888c: 46, 55
10.888d: 215
10.889b–c: 19
10.890a: 159
10.891a: 146
10.891b: 243
10.891e: 159
10.893b: 51
10.899b–c: 210, 235
10.899d–900b: 159
10.900b: 215
10.900c–907b: 197
10.901e: 215
10.902b–c: 34
10.902b: 29, 152
10.902c: 215
10.902d: 33
10.904e–905c: 197, 202
10.905b: 215
10.905d–907d: 46
10.905d: 197, 215
10.906a–b: 197–8
10.906a: 23, 34
10.907a–b: 197
10.907b: 158, 215
10.907d–909d: 250
10.908c–d: 130, 156
10.908e–909a: 175
10.909a–d: 106
10.909a–c: 46
10.909a–b: 52, 54
10.909b: 55
10.909d–910a: 244
10.909d–e: 52, 55, 102–4
10.909d: 133
10.909e: 132
10.909e–910b: 56, 134
10.910a–b: 52, 159
10.910a: 23, 122
10.910b–e: 134
10.910b: 41, 45, 55, 194
10.910c–e: 105, 141, 144
10.910c: 133
11.913a–c: 130
11.914a: 32
11.914e: 152
11.915a: 33
11.916c–d: 108
11.916e–917a: 156, 183, 250
11.917a–b: 156
11.917b: 37
11.920d–921a: 156–7, 221
11.920d–e: 221, 231
11.921b–c: 163, 221
11.921c: 221–2
11.923a: 97–8

11.926e–927b: 251
11.930e–931a: 210
11.930e: 37
11.931a: 33, 96, 164, 179, 181
11.931b–e: 37, 54
11.931d: 197
11.931e: 33, 184
11.933c–e: 130
11.933c: 125
11.933e: 125
11.935b–936a: 88
11.935b: 61
12.941a–b: 221
12.945b–948b: 105
12.945e–946c: 105
12.945e–946c: 195
12.946b–d: 106
12.946c: 105
12.946e–947b: 106
12.947b–e: 106
12.947b–d: 135
12.947d: 105
12.948b–d: 155
12.948b–c: 197
12.948c: 197, 243
12.948d–e: 155
12.948e–949a: 195
12.949b–c: 156
12.950e–951a: 87
12.953a–b: 86, 104
12.953a: 86, 107–8
12.953d–e: 158, 163–4, 221
12.955e–956b: 98–9
12.956b: 96
12.958d–960b: 135
12.958d: 108
12.959b–c: 189, 202
12.960b: 166
12.966d–968a: 236
12.966e–967a: 243
12.968a: 9

Lysis
223a: 22

Menexenus
237c–238b: 224
237d–e: 29
237e–238b: 230
245d–e: 152
245e: 220
246d: 184
247d: 47

Meno
78d–79a: 142
81a–b: 200
91a: 33
99c–d: 126
99c: 125

[*Minos*]
314b: 127
315b–c: 75, 145, 172
318c–321b: 227–8
319e: 227
320b: 228

Parmenides
133d–134e: 34

Phaedo
58a–b: 86
60e–61b: 121
60e: 121
61a–b: 121
62a–c: 150
62b: 23, 33, 215
62c–63a: 33
62d: 31, 215
63c: 33
68d: 245
69e–70a: 245
69e: 33
77b: 245
79e–80a: 33

80d–e: 245
84e–85b: 34
85a: 245
107d–e: 23
108a: 23
113d: 201
113e–114c: 201
114b–c: 151

Phaedrus
224e: 9
235d–e: 99
236b: 99
237a–b: 51
237e–238a: 12
240a–b: 22
240a: 47
242b–d: 115
242b–c: 12, 115
242c: 125
242e: 197
244a–d: 127, 249
244a–b: 138
244d–245a: 138
244d–e: 47
246c–d: 211
246e: 23
248a: 200
248c–e: 129
248e: 200
249b: 70
251a: 96
252c: 31
252d–e: 96, 165
257a–c: 51
257a: 11, 46
257b–c: 47
259c–d: 165, 184
265b: 126
273e–274a: 34
273e: 174, 179
274c: 22
278e–279a: 125
279b–c: 47
279b: 51, 182
279c: 47

Philebus
12b–c: 211
16c–e: 217
16c: 221
25b: 183
28a–b: 9
28d–e: 145
39e–40a: 184, 187
40b: 187
48c–d: 97
61b–c: 51
65c–d: 156
66b: 125
67b: 127

Politicus
269b–274e: 218
271c–e: 25
271d: 22
272a–b: 230
272e: 22, 25
273a4–274e: 218
274c–d: 221, 231
290c–d: 43, 101–2
290c: 129
290d–e: 106
290d: 105
290e: 103–4
293b–c: 33
295c: 33
298e: 33
301c–d: 202
301d: 189

Protagoras
321c–e: 221

321d–332a: 221
322a: 29, 96, 231
325a: 142
325c–d: 142, 191
328b–c: 157
329c–d: 191
329c: 142, 221
330b: 142
331a–323a: 191
331a–c: 142
332c–323a: 221
333b: 192
333d: 12
343a–b: 97
345a: 33
345c: 187
349b–d: 142
354a: 33

Republic
1.327a–b: 85
1.328a: 86
1.331a–b: 192–3
1.331a: 189, 202
1.331c–e: 207
1.341c: 33
1.343b: 33
1.344a–b: 11, 166
1.352a–b: 197–8
1.354a: 8
2.362b–c: 61, 193
2.362c: 32, 41, 55, 95, 184, 248–9
2.363a–e: 199
2.363c–d: 199
2.363d: 157
2.364b–366a: 46, 54
2.364b–365b: 129, 197, 213
2.364b–e: 45, 52
2.364b–c: 106
2.364b: 55
2.364c: 9
2.365d–e: 213, 215
2.365e–366a: 61
2.365e: 98, 248
2.368b–c: 152, 203
2.369d: 33
2.372b: 105
2.377c–3.392a: 214, 237
2.377c: 213
2.377d: 214
2.378a: 22, 81
2.378c–d: 213
2.378c: 22, 237
2.379a–b: 197
2.379a: 214
2.379b–380c: 197
2.379c–d: 214
2.379c: 243
2.380a: 214
2.380b–c: 145, 213–14
2.380d–383c: 122
2.381d: 214
2.381e: 60
2.382e: 23, 118, 122
2.383a–b: 214
2.383c: 213
3.386a: 37
3.387b: 213–14
3.388a: 214
3.389d: 129
3.390b–c: 238
3.391a–e: 145–6
3.391b–e: 23
3.391c–d: 237
3.392a: 22
3.394a: 14
3.395c: 142
3.399b: 43
3.407e: 33
3.408b–c: 197, 214
3.408b: 33, 214
3.408e: 33

3.410a: 33
3.411e: 88
3.415c: 137
4.419a: 61
4.425b: 33, 36
4.427b–c: 1, 57, 105, 131, 243
4.427b: 22, 36, 40
4.427d–e: 203
4.427e: 142
4.431e: 125
4.432a–b: 12
4.432c: 50–1
4.442c–d: 12
4.443a: 10, 31, 190
5.458a: 83
5.458d–e: 147
5.459e–460a: 80, 84
5.459e: 55
5.461a–b: 47, 80, 104, 147
5.461a: 52, 55
5.461e: 136
5.463c–d: 149–51, 193
5.467a: 33, 36
5.468d–e: 88
5.468e–469b: 24
5.469a–b: 32
5.469a: 135
5.469e–470a: 99–100
5.470e: 87
5.475d: 86
6.496c: 115–16
6.496d–e: 189, 202
6.496e: 11, 40
6.501c: 187
6.506a: 125
6.508a: 19
7.523a: 125
7.538a–b: 125
7.540b–c: 24, 57, 135
8.560b: 187
8.568d: 166
9.571b–572b: 122
9.574d–e: 122
9.574d: 166
9.579a: 33
9.580a: 166
9.586b: 125
10.607a: 53
10.612e–613b: 194, 198–9, 201
10.613b–e: 220
10.615a–616a: 200
10.615b: 189
10.615c–d: 149
10.615c: 37
10.617e: 23
10.618a: 70
10.620a–d: 70
10.620d–e: 23
10.621b–d: 200
10.621c: 194, 198

Sophist
232c: 210
265c–266d: 216
265c–d: 243
266b–c: 121

Symposium
175c: 33
183b–c: 156
188b–d: 137, 184
188b–c: 55
188c–d: 129
188c: 37, 179
188d: 43
193c–d: 185
196c: 9, 12, 31
198a: 125
210e: 60
202b: 244
202c: 8
202d–203a: 24, 43, 55, 102, 106, 119–20

202e: 55
203c: 244
205a: 8
212a: 187
212b: 164
220d: 21, 212
242b–243b: 146
257a: 146
265c: 146

[*Theages*]
125e–126a: 47, 245
128a–129d: 116
128d: 115, 177
129e–131a: 116
131a: 51

Theaetetus
142c: 125
148e–151d: 117–18
149b–c: 118, 221, 230
150c: 118
150d–e: 118
151a: 116
151d: 237
172a–b: 172
176a: 218
176b–c: 197–8
178e–179a: 127
210c–d: 118

Timaeus
23d–24d: 223
23d–e: 238
24a: 196
24c–d: 227, 230
25d–e: 223
26c–d: 223
27c–d: 51, 175
27c: 174, 245, 247
28c–30a: 216
38c–40d: 19
40c–d: 120
40d–e: 22
41a: 19, 210
41c: 217
41d: 230
41e–42d: 217
45d–46a: 123
47a–b: 217, 249
47d: 221
48d–e: 51
71a–72c: 120
71d–72b: 217
71d: 121
71d–e: 118
71e–72b: 127
77a–b: 230
80d–e: 230
89d–92c: 217
90a–c: 23
90c: 41
91a–d: 230
92c: 70

PLUTARCH
Aristides 9.1–2: 75
Lycurgus 5–6: 136, 228
Moralia
224b: 100
1102b: 244
1106c–d: 234
Nicias 23.1–6: 129
Numa 8.3: 153
Pelopidas 21.3: 75
Pericles 8.6: 164, 210–11
Themistocles 13.2–3: 75

POLYBIUS
22.10.8: 150

PORPHYRY
De Abstinentia
1.26: 69
2.16: 14, 135, 154, 165

2.28: 69
Life of Pythagoras 36: 69

POSIDONIUS
fragments, [Theiler]
364: 17
429: 47

PRODICUS
fragments, *VS* 84
B5: 231

PROTAGORAS
fragments, *VS* 80
A1: 210
B4: 209

SOPHOCLES
Ajax 1404–5: 151
Antigone 74–5 and 89: 14

STILPON
fragments, [Döring]
177: 43, 45

THEODORUS
fragments, [Mannebach]
230: 167

THEOPHRASTUS
Characters 19.7: 60
On Piety, fragments [Pötscher]
2.1–2: 71
2.4–7: 74
2.12–14: 22, 71
2.20–2: 74
2.22–5: 71
2.26–8: 71
2.29–33: 72
2.33–6: 74
2.36–43: 72
2.43–7: 74
2.47–8: 73
2.50–1: 75
3.8–18: 165
3.15–18: 58–9
3.21–2: 75
4.2–3: 74
4.3–10: 76
4.5–10: 135
5.1–2: 76
6.1–2: 76
6.4–5: 75
7.1–4: 75
7.4–20: 165
7.4–10: 77
7.6–8: 163
7.8–9: 149
7.14–21: 77, 145, 194
7.21–35: 76
7.39–41: 64
7.45–53: 63–4
7.52–4: 66
8.1–3: 73, 75, 135
8.8–10: 64
8.17–20: 145
8.18–21: 66
8.20: 189
8.21–4: 79, 163
9.3–11: 67
9.12–15: 73, 165
10: 64, 145
12.1–5: 72
12.27–42: 77, 194
12.42–9: 55–6, 165, 178
12.42–4: 248
12.44–5: 78
12.64–83: 75
13.15–40: 75
13.15–20: 145
13.15–16: 72
13.22–3 and 27–34: 75
13.40: 73, 165

18: 76
18.40–1: 145
19.1–5: 73, 145

THEOPOMPUS
FGrHist 115 F 344: 62–3

THUCYDIDES
2.38.1: 80, 83–4
3.56: 151
3.84.2: 189
5.104: 189
7.50.4: 129
8.1: 125–6

XENOCRATES
fragments, [IP]
213, 222–3, and 225–30: 27

XENOPHANES
fragments, *VS* 21
A12: 159
A14: 156
B1.13–16: 50, 53
B34: 209

XENOPHON
Agesilaus 11.1: 10
Anabasis 3.1.4–8 and 11–12: 114
Apology
5: 189
10–14: 25, 115
10: 114
11: 154
12–13: 112, 115
12: 114
13: 118–19, 145, 243–4
14: 115, 117–18, 177
19: 140
30: 125
47: 244
Cyropaedia
1.6.46: 114
7.2.15: 31
8.1.24: 41
De Equitum Magistro 9.8–9: 114
Hellenica
1.6.24–7.35: 155
1.7.19: 189, 192
1.7.22: 10, 175
2.4.42: 151
4.1.33: 189
Hiero 4.11: 166
Memorabilia
1.1.2–9: 112–13
1.1.2: 25, 114–15, 154
1.1.3–4: 115
1.1.3: 120
1.1.4–5: 116
1.1.4: 115, 244
1.1.5: 118
1.1.9: 41, 118, 177
1.1.11: 141
1.1.14: 164, 175
1.1.15: 230
1.1.18–20: 155–6
1.1.19: 243
1.1.20: 154, 174
1.2.64: 29
1.3.1: 36, 58, 131–2, 171
1.3.2: 2, 47, 176–7
1.3.3: 56, 62, 64, 154, 165, 179
1.3.4: 113–14
1.4.2: 44, 55, 59
1.4.2–6: 216
1.4.2–16: 215
1.4.4–18: 44
1.4.7: 230
1.4.10: 44, 59, 231
1.4.11: 215
1.4.12: 230
1.4.13: 9, 29, 31
1.4.14–15: 118, 230

1.4.14: 215
1.4.15–18: 177
1.4.18: 41, 110, 118, 177, 230
1.4.19: 189, 198
1.6.10: 8
2.1.28: 31, 40
2.2.1–4: 207
2.2.3: 36
2.2.10: 47
2.2.13–14: 36, 174, 179
2.2.13: 9, 36, 104, 154
2.2.14: 46
2.3.11: 61
2.3.18: 215
3.7.1: 87
3.8.10: 133
3.9.15: 187–8, 249
3.14.3: 47
4.2.36: 47
4.3.2–13: 216
4.3.2: 174
4.3.3: 215
4.3.5 and 7: 216
4.3.9: 31
4.3.10: 249
4.3.12: 113, 115, 118, 177, 215
4.3.13–14: 210
4.3.15: 39
4.3.16–17: 163
4.3.16: 132, 178–9
4.3.17–18: 174
4.3.17: 14, 249
4.4.19–20: 37, 148, 196
4.4.25: 197
4.6.2–4: 104, 161–2, 170
4.7.6: 179
4.7.10: 114
4.8.1–6: 116
4.8.1–2: 128
4.8.1: 215
4.8.11: 114
4.14.19–25: 244

Oeconomicus
2.5: 61
5.3: 14
5.19–6.1: 40, 110, 113, 120, 176–7, 246
5.19: 14
5.20: 31, 174
6.1: 51
11.7–8: 40, 176–7
11.9: 61
15.4: 188

Symposium
4.47–9: 118
4.47–8: 118, 230
4.47: 244
4.48–9: 32, 177, 183
4.49: 41
8.5: 116

ZENO
fragments, *SVF*
1.1 and 41: 111
1.117, 119–20, and 122: 234
1.152: 164, 211
1.154 and 161–2: 164
1.165: 22, 164
1.167: 164
1.184: 8
1.264: 98, 134
1.265: 134
1.266: 96, 98
1.267: 134

General index

Achilles 45, 122, 145
Adams, John 236 n. 96
Aeacus 202
Aeschines of Sphettos 176
Aeschylus 224
Aesop 121
Agathe Tyche 53
agriculture, success in
  and benevolence of gods 230
  and 'dearness to gods' 187 n. 2, 249
  and divination 113, 120 n. 33, 138, 177
  as object of prayer 47
  as reward for 'service to gods' 40–2, 174, 176, 186
agyrtai, *see* priests and priestesses, begging
altars
  founded by divination 96, 122, 132, 138, 177
  honouring of 164, 175
  placement of 133
  pollution of 68–9
  as proof of gods' existence 211
Ammon 49, 57, 132
Amphiaraus 139
Amyntor 54
Anaxagoras 20–1, 179, 210 n. 5, 243
Anaximenes 81 n. 93
Antiphon 83
Antisthenes 97, 101, 107, 189 n. 7, 238 n. 102
Aphrodite 41 n. 30, 239 n. 105
  of Empedocles 69–70
Apollo 34 n. 13, 51 n. 27, 111, 126 n. 54, 220, 244
  of Delphi
    approving cult decisions 23, 139
    Aristotle on 119, 132–3
    determining elements of cult 1, 57–8, 63–4, 73, 75–6, 100, 105, 108–9, 131–9, 163, 165, 172, 179, 213
    and Diogenes 111 n. 4
    and inspired prophecy 127, 138
    and pollution 100, 102, 132, 135–8, 220
    respect among philosophers 137
    and Socrates 31, 34, 58, 115–19, 120 n. 31, 121, 243
    and Sparta's laws 136, 138, 177, 195, 222, 224, 227–8
  of Homer 14 n. 49, 145
  of Magnesia 21 n. 70, 87, 106, 131 n. 72, 135
  Musegetes 83, 88, 90, 221
  Patroös 133 n. 76
Archelaus 202
Ardiaeus 200
Ares 31, 69–70
  of Magnesia 87, 157
Aristaeus 232
Aristarchus 159
Aristippus 47
Aristophanes 17, 20, 21 n. 71, 107

Aristotle 1, 3 n. 4, 15 n. 53, 101, 111 n. 4, 242–3, 246
on abortion 148
on αιφδωτ∀ 173
on Apollo of Delphi 119, 132–3
on beneficence of gods 35, 161, 208, 214 n. 25, 229, 233 n. 87, 235, 249
on celestial bodies 22, 234–5
on *charis* 14, 179–80
on *choregiai* 94
on *daimones* 26, 123, 126 n. 54, 184 n. 116
on 'dearness to gods' 35 n. 15, 37, 180–4, 198 n. 33, 249
on dedications 95–6, 98, 100–1
on divination 119, 122–4, 129–30, 132, 177, 230
on dreams 26 n. 91, 122–4, 230, 244
on *eudaimonia* 8, 41, 98, 180, 198 n. 33, 208, 249
on festivals 80, 84 n. 97, 85–6, 93–4, 170 n. 70
god(s) of 15, 39, 179–80, 182 n. 111, 197 n. 27, 203, 229
and 'good speech' 60 n. 35, 146
on 'honouring the gods' 34–5, 37, 39, 62, 78, 80, 102, 160–1, 163–4, 170 n. 70, 172, 182
on *manteis* 129–30
on oaths 156 n. 46, 157
on prayers 37, 47–8
on priests 102–4, 107, 245–6
on 'proper respect for gods' 78, 142 n. 7, 156 n. 46, 157, 177, 180
on 'religious correctness' 142 n. 7, 146, 148–9, 150 n. 24, 152, 169, 180, 203
on religious officials 107–8
on sacrifices 39, 57, 62, 78–81, 95, 103, 177
on sanctuaries 1, 132–3, 177, 246
on 'service to gods' 33–5, 37–9, 62, 180 n. 105
on stealing sacred things 166
Artemis 118 n. 28, 220–1, 230
of Magnesia 87
Asclepius 18, 67 n. 67
αφσετωβεια, *see* 'lack of respect for gods'
Aspasia 224
Athena 72, 111, 221, 231 n. 81
of Athens 18, 34 n. 13, 88–9, 92 n. 120, 205, 223–7, 230, 237 n. 101, 238
of Magnesia 157, 163, 222, 246, 247 n. 14
of Stagira 101
Atlantis 54 n. 36, 136, 225–8, 230
Atlas 225

beauty, as object of prayer 47 n. 14, 48, 176–7
Bendis 85
Bion 5, 46 n. 12, 99, 167, 177 n. 94
Bouphonia 75
Brasidas 57

Carthage 91, 145
celestial deities 15–16, 19–22, 71, 73, 208, 243
Aristotle on 22, 234–5
and benevolence of gods 231
Chrysippus on 234, 236
Cleanthes on 159, 229–30, 233
Epicurus on 22, 234–6
and Plato 15, 19–22, 210, 235–6, 243
proving existence of gods 19, 234–6

celestial deities (*cont.*)
and Stoics 22, 159, 234–6
Theophrastus on 22, 73
Zeno on, *see* Zeno
charis 14–15, 31, 35, 78, 111, 178–80
Aristotle on 14, 179–80
from dedications 61 n. 56, 96, 179, 210, 240
and honouring the gods, *see* honouring the gods
as human-god relationship 14–15, 30–1, 35–9, 42, 44 n. 6, 61 n. 56, 163, 169, 174, 185–6
and justice 206–7
to parents 36–9, 149, 179
from prayers, *see* prayers
and 'proper respect for gods', *see* 'proper respect'
and 'religious correctness', *see* 'religious correctness'
from sacrifices, *see* sacrifices
and 'service to gods', *see* 'service to gods'
and 'sound thinking' 36, 174
from statues of gods 96, 179, 210
Theophrastus on 55–6, 64, 67, 74
and unwritten laws 37, 244
children
curses against 54
prayers for 46, 52, 177
religious education of 51, 81, 84–5, 90, 191, 211–13
as reward for 'service to gods' 176–7
Chiron 145
chresmoidoi 120, 125–6
chresmologoi 125, 128 n. 61
Chrysippus 5
on cannibalism 150 n. 25
on celestial bodies 234, 236
on *daimones* 26
on divination 111, 138 n. 87
on divine benevolence 218
on *eudaimonia* 8
on justice of gods 203–4
on perjury 156 n. 45
proof of existence of gods 211, 236
chthonic deities 79, 108, 153–4, 160, 247
church fathers 18, 26–7
Cleanthes 5
on benevolence of gods 219, 229–31
on cannibalism 150 n. 25
on celestial bodies 159, 229–30, 234, 236
on divination 111, 229–30, 233
on *eudaimonia* 8
on origins of belief in gods 229–36
on perjury 156 n. 45
on a pig's soul 218 n. 38
and prayer 50
on Socrates 203 n. 46
Clearchus 63–4, 74, 78, 154, 165
Cleito 225
Cleomenes 100 n. 147
comedy 88, 93 n. 123, 232–3, 240 n. 109
criticisms of 61, 92–4, 214 n. 22
Creon 176
Crete 88, 246
laws of, *see* Apollo of Delphi
Critias 97, 223, 225, 230, 232–3
Croesus 207
Cronus 25, 59, 69–70, 81, 201, 218, 222, 224 n. 58, 226
of Carthage 75
of Euhemerus 232
Curetes 88

curses 54, 105, 226
Cybele 106–7
Cypselids 95
Cyrus 41 n. 32

daimones 7, 22–7, 113, 115, 121 n. 35, 123, 184 n. 116, 219, 240
  Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
  Chrsyippus on 26
  daimonion of Socrates 25–6, 112–16, 118–19, 125, 145–6, 177, 194
  of the dead 22–3, 32, 135
  Heraclitus on 23 n. 83
  of Hesiod 23–4
  of Plato 1, 15–16, 22–7, 32, 34 n. 13, 53, 79, 84, 105, 119–20, 131, 133–5, 153–4, 157–8, 170 n. 81, 222, 224 n. 58, 226, 243, 246–7
  and sacrifice 23–4, 119
  Theophrastus on 26
  of Xenocrates 2 n. 1, 26–7
dances 80, 88–9, 92, 138
  in Athens 88–9
  and *charis* of gods 179
  and Dionysus 90
  honouring the gods 56, 89, 153 n. 32, 164–5, 184 n. 117
  in Magnesia 80, 84, 86–7, 104, 134
  making gods propitious 41, 84–5
  and war 88–9
dead, the 22–4, 135, 214
  blasphemy of 60 n. 53, 146
  as *daimones* 23–4, 32, 135
  divine guidance concerning 23, 131–2, 135, 137–9, 177, 243
  eating of 150 n. 25
  funerals for 65, 100, 105–6, 108, 131, 135, 151 n. 28, 153, 177, 196, 243
  justice regarding 190 n. 8
  making propitious 131, 135
  pollution caused by 65, 98–9, 105
  'service' to 32, 36, 131–2, 135, 138–9, 150, 177, 190 n. 8, 196, 243
'dearness to god(s)' (*θεοφιλιῶα*) 13, 35 n. 15, 37–8, 42, 180–6, 189, 197, 248–9
  Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
  and dedications, *see* dedications
  Democritus on 185 n. 35
  Diogenes on 180 n. 104, 188
  and divination, *see* divination
  and divine benevolence 216, 224–5
  Epicurus on 182 n. 111
  and *eudaimonia* 180, 185–6, 201–2, 249
  and good luck 183 n. 116
  and 'good speech' 32, 183–4
  and justice 187–8, 193–4, 198, 201, 249
  and oaths 32, 183–4
  prayer for 47, 183 n. 115
  and 'proper respect for gods', *see* 'proper respect'
  and 'religious correctness' 30–1, 42, 178, 185, 187
  and sacrifices, *see* sacrifices
  and 'service to gods' 31–2, 41–2, 63, 178, 183–4, 193, 249
  and Socrates 115 n. 15, 118, 177–8
  and 'sound thinking' 187–9, 197
  Theopompus on 63
  and treatment of parents 184–5

'dearness to god(s)' (*cont.*)
and virtue 186–7
and wealth 63, 193
death 220, 240, 245
dedications 18, 20, 49, 55, 95–101, 179 n. 100, 181 n. 107, 225–6, 240
and Aristotle 95–6, 98, 100–1
and 'dearness to gods' 181 n. 107, 184, 193, 249
Diogenes on 101
and divination 137
Epicurus on 97, 101
honouring the gods 56, 62 n. 56, 160
persuading the gods 45, 59, 98, 250
and pollution 98–100
proper kinds of 69–70, 94, 98–101, 135
and 'proper respect for gods' 41, 69, 137, 160
propitiating the gods 69
and 'religious correctness' 41, 98, 193
and 'service to gods' 27, 32, 41, 43, 51, 95, 184, 193, 248
and wealth 62 n. 56, 193
Zeno on, *see* Zeno
Delphic Oracle, *see* Apollo of Delphi
Demeter 71, 73–4, 101 n. 151, 231
of Eleusis 18, 139
of Nemea 101
Demetrius of Phaleron 94
demiurge 2, 15, 19, 118, 208–9, 215–20, 230, 237
Democritus 5
on celestial phenomena 233–4
on 'dearness to gods' 185 n. 35
on divination 110, 111 n. 4, 124
on dreams 124, 236
on festivals 83
on prayer 47 n. 13
on statues 97
Diagoras of Melos 101 n. 153, 156
Dicaearchus 110, 124
Diogenes of Sinope 5, 193 n. 17, 209 n. 3
on 'dearness to gods' 180 n. 104, 188
on dedications 101
and Delphic Oracle 111 n. 4
on dreams 124, 130
on festivals 93 n. 123
on prayer 47 nn. 13 and 17
on sacrifice 47 n. 13, 58, 80 n. 91
on stealing sacred property 109, 167
Dionysus 221, 230–2
festivals of 61, 81 n. 92, 83, 86 n. 101, 88–93, 101 n. 151, 107
of Icarion 76, 139
and wine 72, 89–91, 221, 231
Dioscuri 88
divination 40, 55, 60, 78, 110–39, 145, 214, 222 n. 52, 244, 246
Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
Chrysippus on 111, 138 n. 8
Cleanthes on 111, 229–30, 233
and *daimones* 24–6, 112–13, 119–20
and 'dearness to gods' 32, 42, 115 n. 15, 118, 137–8, 177, 183, 184 n. 118, 186, 216
Democritus on 110, 111 n. 4, 124
and divine benevolence 44, 118, 215–18
and dreams, *see* dreams
Epicurus on 110–11, 124, 130
establishing elements of cult 81, 96, 111, 122, 130–9, 177, 196

philosophers' acceptance of 110–12, 119, 124, 136–7
and pollution 132, 135, 136–9, 177
as proof of gods' existence 229–30
and 'proper respect for gods', *see* 'proper respect'
Pythagoras on 110–12
and sacrifices, *see* sacrifices
and 'service to gods' 2, 27, 32, 41–3, 110, 130–1, 138–9, 177, 183, 185–6
and Socrates 25–6, 112–20, 155, 177, 244
and 'sound thinking' 127, 129 n. 68
Stoics on 110–11, 124
and war, *see* war
Xenophanes on 110–11, 124, 230
Zeno on 110–11
see also Apollo of Delphi; *chresmoidoi*; *chresmologoi*; dreams; *manteis*; Zeus
dreams 120–5, 133–4, 138
Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
criticisms of 122–3, 130, 244
and *daimones* 26 n. 91, 119, 121, 123
Democritus on 124, 236
Diogenes on 124, 130
and divination 110–12, 116, 119–25, 138, 183
means of knowing gods 124, 236
of Socrates 116, 121–2

Egyptians 71, 73, 106, 223, 225, 231
Empedocles 41 n. 30, 69–70
Endymion 242
Epicurus 5
on *charis* 44 n. 6, 178 n. 96
on celestial bodies 22, 234–6
on 'dearness to gods' 182 n. 111
and dedications 97, 101
divination, rejection of 110–11, 124, 230
and festivals 85, 94–5
gods of 15, 44–5, 59, 203, 229
on honouring the gods 161
on means of knowing gods 236
and oaths 156
and prayer 44–5, 59, 244
on 'proper respect for gods' 159
on 'religious correctness' 161
on sacrifices 44, 58–9
on statues 97
Epimenides 57 n. 45
Eros 24, 31, 46 n. 11, 47 n. 17, 115, 146, 164 n. 65, 184 n. 118, 244 n. 5
eudaimonia 6–9, 84, 98, 184 n. 118, 186, 198 n. 33, 208, 222, 226
Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
Chrysippus on 8
Cleanthes on 8
of the dead 146, 201–2
and 'dearness to gods' 180, 185–6, 201–2, 249
and festivals 84–5
of the gods 197 n. 27
and laws 228
and moral goodness 185–6, 201–2, 228, 241
prayed for 47
and 'proper respect for gods' 185, 241
and 'religious correctness' 147, 185, 241
and sacrifices 81
and 'service to gods' 40–2, 51, 65, 95, 248

eudaimonia (*cont.*)
Stoics on 8
Zeno on 8
Euhemerus 231–3
ευφφημιτϖα, *see* 'good speech'
Euripides 232–3
ευφσετϖβεια, *see* 'proper respect for gods'
exegetai 57, 104–5, 107–9, 130–1, 134, 136, 147 n. 15

Fate, Stoic 50
festivals 16, 23, 27, 79, 82–95
and Apollo 1, 83, 87–8, 90, 121, 134, 137
and Ares 87
Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
and Artemis 87
and Athena 88–9, 92
in Athens 49, 81, 85–9, 92, 94
and Bendis 85–6
and *charis* 80, 89, 179, 246
criticisms of 60, 63, 91–4, 193–4
and Curetes 88
Democritus on 83
Diogenes on 93 n. 123
and Dionysus, *see* Dionysus
and education 83, 87–90, 95, 212
Epicurus on 85, 94–5
established by divination 1, 84–5, 134, 137–8, 177
and *eudaimonia* 84–5
of heroes 87
honouring the gods 56, 63, 80, 84–5, 89, 94–5, 160, 164–5
of Magnesia 1, 79–80, 83–4, 86–8, 104–6, 130, 132, 134
of marriage, *see* marriage
and Muses 83, 87–8, 90, 92
officials of 104–9, 130, 134
and 'proper respect for the gods', *see* 'proper respect'
propitiating a deity 84–5
Pythagoras on 86
and 'service to gods' 63
Theopompus on 63, 154
of women 79
and Zeus 86–7
funerals, *see* dead, the

Ge 224, 230
'good speech' (*ευφφημιτϖα*) 49, 59–61, 92, 235
Aristotle on 60 n. 35, 146
and 'dearness to gods' 32, 183–4
and lies about gods 60–1, 92 n. 120, 145–6, 240
and parents 38
in prayer 49, 60–1, 146
and 'proper respect for gods' 60, 154, 240
and 'religious correctness' 146
at sacrifices 59–61, 67, 92, 120 n. 33, 146, 154
and 'service to gods' 32, 183–4
Great Gods, of Samothrace 101

health 199, 218
and divination 138
and gods 16, 220, 226, 248
as human good 98, 219–20, 249
as object of prayer 40, 46–7, 138, 176
and purifications 138
as reward for 'service to gods' 40–1, 138, 176
Hecate 64, 165
Hector 145
Helen 237 n. 101

Helios 20–1, 74, 106
of Magnesia 21 n. 70
Hephaestus 221, 230, 231 n. 81
of Athens 223–7, 238
of Magnesia 157
Hera 211 n. 11
of Euripides 17, 239 n. 105
of Homer 238
of Magnesia 108 n. 179, 148 n. 17
Heracles 17, 40, 232, 239 n. 105
Heraclides of Pontus 86
Heraclitus 5
and *daimones* 23 n. 83
on Dionysiac festivals 91–2
on praying to statues 96–7
on purity in sacrificing 66 n. 65
Hermarchus 51 n. 26
Hermes 63, 165
Herodotus 204
on gods of Homer and Hesiod 213–14
on Persian gods 20
heroes, as deities 96–7, 244
as children of the gods 23 n. 78, 89, 197 n. 28
as class of deities 22–6, 135
festivals of 87
honouring of 53, 89, 153, 170 n. 81
of Magnesia 79, 87
'proper respect for' 154, 170 n. 81
rank among deities 26, 247–8
'service to' 32, 105, 131, 133, 196, 243
Hesiod 19, 93 n. 123, 237–9
daimones of 23–4
and Empedocles 70
gods of 15–18, 165 n. 68, 209, 213–14, 217, 237, 239
and Muses 55 n. 27
on rewards from gods 199
on sacrifice 154
and 'service to gods' 30
and Zeno 165 n. 68
Hestia of Magnesia 246–7
Hipparchus 95 n. 128
Hippodamus 246
Hippolytus 54, 239 n. 105
Homer 19, 93 n. 123, 205 n. 49, 213–14, 237–9
gods of 2, 15–18, 45, 209, 213–14, 237
and Muses 51 n. 27
on oaths 17
prayer in 14, 17, 45, 51 n. 27
and purity 65–6
on rewards from gods 199
on sacrifice in 17, 45, 74
homicide
and curses 54, 105
and divination 136, 177
of kin 54, 149, 166 n. 72, 200, 202–3
pollution from 65–6, 100 n. 148, 102, 105, 108, 136
and 'proper respect' 140 n. 2
punished in afterlife 200–2, 245
and 'religious correctness' 65, 140 n. 2, 149–51, 200–3
trials for 54, 130, 177
homoiosis 188–9, 197–200, 218
honouring the gods 13, 34–9, 42, 56–7, 62, 78, 82, 102, 153–4, 158, 160–5, 170 n. 81, 172–3, 181–2, 210, 231–2, 247–9
and their altars 164, 175
Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
and *charis* 42, 61 n. 56, 62, 64, 78, 89, 96, 154, 163, 169, 179, 248
through dances, *see* dances

honouring the gods (*cont.*)
through dedications, *see* dedications
Epicurus on 161
through festivals, *see* festivals
giving knowledge of gods 164, 211–12, 236
through hymns 56
through prayers 160
and 'proper respect for gods', *see* 'proper respect'
and 'religious correctness' 30–1, 64 n. 59, 154, 161
through sacrifices 31, 35, 55–7, 59, 61 n. 56, 62–3, 70–1, 73–8, 80, 82, 84–5, 145, 154, 160, 163–5, 170, 248
and their sanctuaries 153, 163, 175
and 'service to gods' 30–1, 34–9, 42, 62–4, 82, 160, 165, 216
Theophrastus on, *see* Theophrastus
Theopompus on, *see* Theopompus
and *xenoi* 158, 163–4
Zeno on, *see* Zeno
Horae 74
hymns 18, 23, 53, 56, 79, 84 n. 96, 137, 179, 183
ιϑεροσυλιτϖα, *see* 'stealing sacred things'

incest 136, 148, 184, 196, 216, 244, 250

Jefferson, Thomas 236 n. 96

Kudoimos 69–70

'lack of respect for gods' (αφσεϖβεια) 9, 30, 140–2, 162 n. 62, 175, 189 n. 7, 200, 238; *see also* 'proper respect'
and Anaxagoras 20–1
causes of 159, 166, 250
and introducing new gods 114 n. 13, 115, 159–60, 194–5
laws concerning 52, 105, 134, 141–2, 144–5, 160 n. 57, 166, 170, 194–5
and mistaken beliefs about gods 115, 158–9, 168, 174, 240, 250
and Protagoras 210
and sacrifices 141, 144–5, 158 n. 54, 168
and Socrates 114–15, 159–60, 162 n. 62, 174, 194–5, 203 n. 46, 240 n. 108
and stealing sacred property 166, 170
Xenophanes on 159 n. 55
laws, unwritten 37, 136, 148, 196, 216, 244
Leto 98
Lucretius 234
Lycurgus of Athens 94
Lycurgus of Sparta 136 n. 82, 228

magic 239 n. 105
criticisms and punishments of 46, 52, 59, 106, 129–30, 158 n. 54, 197, 250
and *daimones* 24
Persian 32 n. 9
persuading the gods 46, 52, 59, 106, 197
manteis 120, 125–30, 136, 244
Aristotle on 129–30
criticisms of 45, 129–30, 136–7, 250
and the *daimonion* 112 n. 8, 119, 145, 244

duties in Magnesia 104–5, 130, 134
Euthyphro as 128–9
inspired 126–30, 249
and 'service to gods' 32
Socrates as 125
status of 129
marriage 108–9, 149–50
and divination 177
made sacred 147, 168
as object of prayer 46–7
prayers at 52, 80, 147, 151
and 'religious correctness' 147–8, 150–1, 168
sacrifices at 80, 84 n. 96, 104, 147
Melissus of Samos 209 n. 3
Menander 59
metempsychosis 68–70, 199 n. 36
Pythagoras on 68–70
Minos 146, 227–8
Mnemosyne 51 n. 27
Moirai 80
Musaeus 199 n. 38
Muses 51 n. 27, 83, 87–9, 92, 111, 121, 221
mysteries 129, 245
at Eleusis 74, 81 n. 92
Orphic 68, 107

Nemesis 38

oaths 17 n. 58, 155–7, 168, 204, 205 n. 51, 250
Aristotle on 156 n. 46, 157
Chrysippus on 156 n. 45
Cleanthes on 156 n. 45
and 'dearness to gods' 32, 183–4
Epicurus on 156
and Helios 20
Homer on 17
of jurors 155, 195
and laws 54 n. 36, 155 n. 41, 196, 226
and 'proper respect for gods', *see* 'proper respect'
Pythagoras on 156 n. 45
and 'recognizing the gods' 155
and 'religious correctness' 140 n. 2, 150–1, 157, 195
in sanctuaries 157 n. 46, 195
and 'service to gods' 32, 183
and *xenoi* 156 n. 41
Oedipus 48, 54
Oenomaus of Gadara 119
oracles 81, 96, 111, 112 n. 7, 116, 119, 125, 135, 137 n. 84, 183, 214, 228, 249; *see also* Apollo of Delphi
orphans 251
Orpheus and Orphics 68, 107, 199 n. 38, 213 n. 18
οὐθσιοϖτηϒ, *see* 'religious correctness'
Ouranus 81, 218
of Euhemerus 232

Panathenaea 92 n. 120, 95 n. 128, 223
parents 182
and *charis* 36–9, 149, 179
and curses 54
and 'dearness to gods' 184–5
eating of 69
'good speech' toward 38
honour to 36–9, 54, 78, 148–9, 153–4, 163–4, 170 n. 81, 216, 244, 247–8
and 'proper respect' 37, 141 n. 2, 153–4, 170 n. 81, 184, 196, 200

parents (*cont.*)
proper treatment of 149–51, 153, 169, 184–5, 201
and 'religious correctness' 38, 141 n. 2, 148–51, 153–4, 164, 168–9, 170 n. 81, 185, 196, 201–3, 209
religious education by 51, 191, 212–13
'service to' 33, 36–9, 42, 148–9
unwritten laws about 196, 216, 244
Patroclus 145–6
Pentheus 176
Pericles 80 n. 89, 83–4, 164, 210–12, 236
Perithous 146
Persaeus 231
Persians 20, 41 n. 32, 75 n. 84, 100, 212
Phoenix 45, 54
Phryne 114, 160 n. 57
Pindar 192–3, 205 n. 49, 237
Pisistratus 95 n. 128
Pluton 79
poets and poetry 129, 185, 200, 205 n. 49, 210; *see also* comedy; Hesiod; Homer; tragedy
and Apollo 88, 221
criticisms of 60–1, 92–4, 159, 214, 238–9
and divine inspiration 126, 221
and Muses 88, 221
and prayers 53
as source for religion 16–19, 35, 204–6, 213–14, 232–3, 238–40
pollution 65–70, 78, 166–7, 218 n. 35
and Apollo of Delphi, *see* Apollo of Delphi
and the dead 65, 98–9, 105
and dedications 98–100
and divination 132, 135, 136–9, 177
Empedocles on 69–70
and funerals 65, 105, 135–6
Heraclitus on 66 n. 65
and Helios 20
of homicide, *see* homicide
Orphics on 68
of priests 102, 105, 135
Pythagoreans on 65–7, 69, 111
and 'religious correctness' 65, 67 n. 67, 68, 141, 144, 169, 218 n. 35
and sacrifices 66, 68–70, 78, 141, 144
of sanctuaries 65, 99–100, 133
of the soul 66–7, 137
of suicide 136
Theophrastus on 66–7, 78, 145
Porphyry 55 n. 40, 66 n. 66, 77
Poseidon 69–70, 146
of Athens 205
of Atlantis 99 n. 144, 136, 195, 225–7, 230
of Homer 17 n. 58
Posidonius 17 n. 57, 47
prayers 17 n. 58, 18, 27, 43–55, 133, 240
to Agathe Tyche 53
to Apollo 14 n. 49, 51 n. 27
Aristippus on 47 n. 17
Aristotle on 37, 47–8
beginning and ending activities 41, 51, 174–5, 245, 247
to Bendis 85–6
and *charis* 14 n. 49, 30–1, 43, 45 n. 7, 171 n. 82, 175, 178–9, 211

and Cleanthes 50
criticisms of 3, 44–8, 50, 52–5, 98, 177
as curses, *see* curses
and *daimones* 23–4, 119
and 'dearness to gods' 31, 47, 118 n. 112, 183 n. 115
Democritus on 47 n. 13
Diogenes on 47 nn. 13 and 17
Epicurus on 44–5, 59, 244
and 'good speech' 49, 60–1, 146
Heraclitus on 96–7
Hermarchus on 51 n. 26, 244
Homeric, *see* Homer
and justice 49–50, 53
and marriage, *see* marriage
to Muses 51 n. 27
objects of 3, 40, 46–53, 101, 176–7, 220, 244–5
of parents 37
persuading gods 43–6, 52, 197, 250
and priests 52, 101–5, 147
proper 3, 30–1, 41, 47–50, 53, 55, 61, 177
and 'proper respect for gods', *see* 'proper respect'
propitiating the gods 41, 45 n. 9, 51–2, 159, 243
Pythagoras on 48–9, 177
and 'religious correctness' 31, 41, 43, 144, 151, 169, 171 n. 82, 178, 211
and religious education 51, 81, 212–13
and 'service to gods' 2, 27, 30–2, 40–1, 43–4, 51, 59, 95, 176, 248
and 'sound thinking' 36, 51, 174–5, 244–5, 247
to statues 96–7
status vs. sacrifices and dedications 55, 248
Stilpon on 45 n. 7, 178 n. 98
Xenophanes on 50, 53
to Zeus 46 n. 12, 49–50
priests and priestesses 5, 101–7, 200
Antisthenes on 107
Aristotle on 102–4, 107, 245–6
begging 45, 52, 106, 129, 213 n. 18
criticisms of 105, 129; *see also* priests; begging
in Magnesia 52, 54, 80, 102–6, 130, 134–5
priests and priestesses 5, 101–7, 200
and Plato's auditors 105–6, 135
and pollution 102, 105, 135
and prayer and sacrifice 24, 52, 54, 80, 101–6, 147
selection of 102, 178–9
status of 101–3, 105, 246
Prodicus 5, 231–3
Prometheus 221, 231 n. 81, 230–1
'proper respect for gods' (*ευφσεϖβεια*) 6–7, 9, 15, 27, 37, 140–5, 152–86; *see also* 'lack of respect'
Apollo of Delphi on 58, 64, 131–2, 137, 172
Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
from benefits received 215–6, 231
and *charis* 30–1, 62, 64, 82, 154, 169, 171 n. 82, 207
continual 63–4, 76, 78–9, 169
and correct beliefs about gods 195, 236
and 'dearness to gods' 31, 63, 137, 180–4
through dedications 41, 69, 137, 160
and divination 114, 137, 177, 185–6

'proper respect for gods' (*cont.*)
Epicurus on 159
and *eudaimonia* 185, 241
through festivals 79, 137, 154, 160
and 'good speech' 60, 154, 240
and honouring the gods 62–4, 143, 153–4, 158, 160–4, 169–70, 173 n. 86, 175, 195, 216
and introducing new gods 114 n. 13, 159, 195
and justice 29, 31, 190, 194–6, 202, 205, 207, 241
and *nomoi* 58, 64, 104, 132, 163, 168, 172, 196
and oaths 140 n. 2, 155–7, 168, 184, 195
and pollution 141
through prayer 30–1, 41, 60, 160, 169, 171 n. 82, 175
rewards from 154, 176–86, 207, 249
through sacrifice 30–1, 36, 41, 58, 60, 62–4, 76–9, 82, 132, 137, 141, 144, 154, 158 n. 54, 159–60, 168–170, 171 n. 82, 172, 177, 179, 184, 190 n. 8, 248
and sanctuaries 141, 153
and 'service to gods' 2, 27, 29–31, 41, 58, 63, 140, 160, 168–71, 174, 176, 189, 196, 205, 207
and Socrates 58, 62, 114, 131–2, 141, 154–5, 174, 177
and 'sound thinking' 154–5, 171–2, 173 n. 86, 174–6, 188–90
and suppliants 157–8
Theophrastus on, *see* Theophrastus
Theopompus on 62–4, 154, 248
and unwritten laws 37, 216, 244
and *xenoi* 157–8
propitiousness of gods (*ιλαοτητη*) 11, 40–1, 146
through dance 41, 84–5
through dedications 69
of the dead 131, 135
and divination 113, 118, 177
through festivals 85
through prayer 41, 45 n. 9, 51–2, 159, 243
benefits from 40, 85
through sacrifice 41, 45 n. 9, 52, 84–5, 159
through 'service to gods' 40, 42
through statues 41
Protagoras 97, 157 n. 46, 191, 209–10, 230–1
purity, *see* pollution
Pythagoras and Pythagoreans 5, 67–70, 111, 200 n. 39
and Apollo 111, 179
on athletic festivals 86
and divination 110–12
and metempsychosis 68–70
and oaths 156 n. 45
on pollution 65–7, 69, 111
on prayer 48–9, 177
on sacrifice 65–70, 111, 179
and Zeus 111
Pythia, *see* Apollo of Delphi

'recognizing the gods' (*νομιτζειν του;∀ θεουτ∀*) 11, 15, 21 n. 72, 231
and altars 231
and honouring the gods 162 n. 62
and oaths 155
and sacrifices 154

and 'service to gods' 29
and Socrates 21 n. 72, 25–6, 29, 114–15, 154–5, 160, 162, 194–5
and statues 96, 231
'religious correctness' (*οὐσιότης*) 2, 6–7, 11–12, 15, 104, 140–52, 167–78, 187–207, 219 n. 41
and abortions 148
and accounts of god 60 n. 53, 112 n. 8, 115, 145–6, 151–2, 158, 214, 240
Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
and cannibalism 74–5, 150
causes of 166
caution concerning 144, 170, 192
and *charis* 30–1, 169, 171 n. 82, 178, 211
and conventions and traditions 82, 143, 145, 161, 168–70, 172, 185
and 'dearness to gods', *see* 'dearness to gods'
and dedications 41, 98, 193
and divination 121
Epicurus on 161
and *eudaimonia* 147, 185, 241
of the gods 198 n. 32
and gods' names 211
and 'good speech' 146
and homicide, *see* homicide
and honouring the gods 30–1, 64 n. 59, 154, 161
and human sacrifice 145
and incest 136 n. 81, 148, 196, 250
and justice 28–9, 31, 77, 143 n. 8, 144, 150 n. 26, 166, 173, 187–207, 240–1
and 'lack of respect for gods' 141–2, 144–5, 160 n. 57, 170
laws concerning 141–4, 160 n. 57, 166, 172, 185, 194–6, 203
and marriage 147–8, 150–1, 168
and oaths, *see* oaths
and parents, treatment of, *see* parents
and pollution, *see* pollution
and prayer, *see* prayers
and 'proper respect for gods' 154, 171 n. 82
rewards and punishments 31, 65, 73, 153, 176–86, 192–3, 199–203, 207
and sacrifices 30–1, 41, 58, 64–5, 68, 73–4, 77, 82, 98, 104, 141, 144–5, 151, 168–71, 178, 193, 194 nn. 18 and 19
and sanctuaries 141
and 'service to gods' 2, 27, 29–31, 41, 140, 168–9, 170–1, 174, 176, 180 n. 105, 189–90, 196, 203, 205, 207
and sexual licence 147–8, 151, 195
and slaves, treatment of 152
and Socrates 112 n. 8, 115, 121, 141, 145–6
and 'sound thinking' 144, 154, 171–2, 174–5, 187–9, 191–2
and stealing sacred things 151, 166–7, 170, 175, 194, 201–2
Stoics on 190 n. 8
and suicide 150
and supplicants 151, 158
Theophrastus on, *see* Theophrastus
as a virtue 142, 143 n. 8, 168, 171, 173, 191–2, 203
and *xenoi* 150–1, 158, 202

Rhadymanthys 202
Rhea 218

sacrifices 2, 16, 17 n. 58, 18, 27, 43–4, 55–83, 101–8, 133, 137, 193, 240
  and Apollo of Delphi 1, 57–8, 63–4, 73, 75–6, 105, 111, 131–2, 134–5, 138, 163, 165, 172, 178–9, 243
  Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
  at Athens 57 n. 45, 60–1, 76
  and celestial deities 20
  and *charis* 14 n. 49, 30–1, 36, 55–6, 62, 64, 67, 74, 78, 80, 82, 154, 163, 171 n. 82, 178–9, 240, 246, 248
  criticisms of 58–9, 62–4, 67–70, 77, 98, 179
  and curses 54
  and *daimones* 23–4, 119
  and 'dearness to gods' 31, 63, 184, 193, 249
  Diogenes on 47 n. 13, 58, 80 n. 91
  and divination 57–8, 60, 78, 81, 85, 111–12, 114, 120, 133, 137–9, 177
  Empedocles on 69–70
  Epicurus on 44, 58–9
  and Epimenides 57 n. 45
  expensive 39, 61–7, 82, 135, 179, 184, 193, 248–9
  and festivals 60–1, 63, 79–80, 84, 87–8
  and 'good speech', *see* 'good speech'
  Heraclitus on 66 n. 65
  Hesiod on 154
  Homer on 17, 45, 74
  and honouring the gods, *see* honouring the gods
  of humans 67, 75
  and justice 45–6, 52, 59, 62, 77, 98, 106, 129, 193, 194 nn. 18 and 19, 197
  and 'lack of respect for gods' 141, 144–5, 158 n. 54, 168
  and magistrates 103–4, 107–8
  in Magnesia 79–81, 134, 246
  at marriages, *see* marriage
  and metempsychosis 68–70
  and moral goodness 64–7
  and *nomoi* 57–8, 73, 78, 81–2, 104, 163, 168, 170, 190 n. 8, 213
  and Orphics 68
  persuading the gods 45–6, 52, 59, 64, 67, 98, 106, 129, 156, 197
  and pollution 66, 68–70, 78, 141, 144
  Porphyry on 77
  and priests 101–8, 147
  private 52, 61, 102, 133–4, 154
  and 'proper respect for gods' *see* 'proper respect'
  propitiating gods 41, 45 n. 9, 52, 84–5, 159
  Pythagoras on 65–70, 111, 179
  and 'religious correctness', *see* 'religious correctness'
  and religious education 51, 81, 212–13
  and 'service to gods' 27, 30–32, 39, 41, 44, 51, 55, 59, 63, 82, 95, 105, 131, 165, 176, 183–4, 193, 243, 248
  and Socrates 58, 62, 98, 154, 194 n. 18, 243
  status vs. prayers and dedications 55, 248
  Stoics on 58

Theophrastus on, *see* Theophrastus
Theopompus on, *see* Theopompus
sanctuaries 1, 10, 131–4, 168, 246–7
and Apollo of Delphi 1, 57, 105, 131–2, 137–9, 172, 243
Aristotle on 1, 132–3, 177, 246
and *daimones* 23
and dedications 99–100
founded by divination 122, 132–4, 137–9, 177, 196
of Helios in Magnesia 21
honouring 153, 164, 175
in Magnesia 21, 52, 132–4, 141, 244
and oaths 57 n. 46, 195
officials of 108
pollution of 65, 99–100, 133
private 52, 102–3, 122, 133–4, 141, 153, 159, 194, 244
robbing of 10, 99, 151, 194
and 'service to gods' 32, 105, 131, 243
Zeno on 134
Scythians 61 n. 56
seer, *see manteis*
Selene 21
'service to gods' (*θεραπειτωα τω ∋ ν θεω ∋ ν*) 2, 7, 9–10, 27, 29–42, 61–3, 103, 140–1, 165, 168, 176, 180 n. 105, 188–9, 213, 246–7
and Apollo of Delphi 105, 118, 131, 165, 213, 243
Aristotle on, *see* Aristotle
and *charis* 31, 36, 38–9, 42, 178, 206–7
and 'dearness to gods', *see* 'dearness to gods'
and dedications, *see* dedications
and divination, *see* divination
and *eudaimonia*, *see eudaimonia*
and festivals 63
and 'good speech' 32, 183–4
to heroes, *see* heroes
and honouring the gods, *see* honouring the gods
and justice 29, 31, 42, 189–90, 193–4, 196, 203, 205
and moral goodness 183
and oaths 32, 183
and prayers, *see* prayers
and 'proper respect for gods', *see* 'proper respect'
propitiating the gods 40–2
and 'religious correctness', *see* 'religious correctness'
rewards of 40–2, 110, 138, 174, 176–7, 183, 216, 220, 231
and sacrifice, *see* sacrifices
and sanctuaries, *see* sanctuaries
and 'sound thinking' 40–2, 174, 176, 188
Theopompus on 63, 165
Seven Sages 97
Sibyl 127, 138
Silenus 146
Sisyphus 232–3
slaves and slavery
'serving the gods' as 30–4, 36
and 'stealing sacred things' 175
treatment of 152
and wine 91
Solon 223, 225, 228
σωφροσυτωνη, *see* 'sound thinking'
'sound thinking' 12–13, 15, 142, 174–6, 187–9, 191–2
of Achilles 145
and *charis* 36, 174
and 'dearness to gods' 187–9, 197
and divination 127, 129 n. 68

'sound thinking' (*cont.*)
as a divine good 219, 249
and drunkenness 91
and *homoiosis* 188–9, 197
and prayer, *see* prayers
and 'proper respect for gods', *see* 'proper respect'
and 'religious correctness', *see* 'religious correctness'
and 'service to gods', see 'service to gods
of Socrates 117 n. 25, 155, 174
and 'stealing sacred things' 175
Spartans 49
dances of 88
dedications of 100 n. 147
Dionysia of 89
laws of, *see* Apollo of Delphi
prayers of 49, 61
sacrifices of 61
statues of gods 18, 23, 96–7, 99 n. 144, 153 n. 34, 210
Antisthenes on 97
and Aristotle 100–1
and *charis* 96, 179, 210
Democritus on 97
Epicurus on 97
founded by divination 96, 132, 138
honouring of 96, 164
of Poseidon on Atlantis 225
prayers to 96–7
propitiating gods 41
and 'recognizing the gods' 96, 231
'stealing sacred things' (ιϑϵροσυλιτϖα) 10, 99, 151, 166–7, 194, 250
Aristotle on 166
Bion on 99, 167
causes of 166–7, 175
Diogenes on 109, 167
and justice 166, 194
and 'lack of respect' 166, 170
laws concerning 166, 170, 195
and 'religious correctness', *see* 'religious correctness'
and 'sound thinking' 175
Stilpon 45 n. 7, 178 n. 78
Stoics 5, 219, 242 n. 1, 247 n. 145; *see also* Chrysippus; Cleanthes; Zeno
on celestial bodies 22, 159, 234–6
on divination 110–11, 124
on *eudaimonia* 8
on Fate 50
on Reason as a god 16
on 'religious correctness' 190 n. 8
strength of body
as human good 219–20, 249
as object of prayer 40, 48, 176–7
as reward for 'service to gods' 40–1, 176–7
suppliants 43 n. 2, 151, 157, 158 n. 53, 250–1

temples 23, 133
and *charis* 14 n. 49
founded by divination 96, 132, 138
of Poseidon on Atlantis 225–6
Zeno on 134
Themistocles 100
Theodectes 162 n. 62
Theodorus 167 n. 78
Theophrastus 5, 55 n. 40, 73, 163, 249
on celestial bodies 22, 73
on *charis* 55–6, 64, 67, 74
and *daimones* 26
on expensive offerings 63–5, 76, 248

on honouring the gods 55–7, 64 n. 59, 73, 75, 77–8, 145, 165
and justice 77, 194 n. 19
and moral goodness 66–7, 248
and pollution 66–7, 78, 145
on 'proper respect for gods' 63–4, 76, 78, 248
on 'religious correctness' 64 n. 59, 73–4, 77, 145, 194 n. 19
on sacrifice 55–9, 63–7, 70–9, 135, 165, 194 n. 19, 248–9
Theopompus 62, 74, 165
and Apollo of Delphi 135, 165
and *charis* 63–4
and Clearchus 63–4, 74, 78, 154, 165
and 'dearness to gods' 63
on expensive offerings 62, 65, 135, 165, 248
and festivals 63, 154
and honouring the gods 63–4, 165
and moral goodness 248
and 'proper respect for gods' 62–4, 154, 248
and sacrifice 62–3
and 'service to gods' 63, 165
Theseus 54, 146, 237 n. 101
Thesmophoria 101 n. 151
Tiresias 128
tragedy 93 n. 123, 148, 151 n. 28
and *charis* 206–7
criticisms of 60–1, 92–4, 238–9
and *daimones* 7 n. 13, 22 n. 76
manteis in 128
and 'service to gods' 30, 33 n. 11
and 'sound thinking' 175–6
as source for religion 16–19, 35, 204–6, 238–40

Uranus 26

Varro 17 n. 57, 19

war, success in
and Athena 89, 221, 223
and *chresmologoi* 125–6
and dances 88–9
and divination 40, 120 n. 33, 138, 177
and *manteis* 125–7, 129
as object of prayer 40, 176–7, 220
as reward for 'service to gods' 40–2, 85, 176, 220
wealth
and *charis* 64
and 'dearness to gods' 63, 193
and dedications 62 n. 56, 193
and divination 40, 177
and 'honouring the gods' 62 n. 56, 63
as a human good 219–20, 249
and liturgies 94
as object of prayer 40, 47–8, 176–7
and 'proper respect for gods' 64
and 'religious correctness' 64
as reward for 'service to gods' 40–1, 63, 176, 193

Xenocrates 2, 26–7
xenoi 157–8, 250
and 'honouring the gods' 158, 163–4
and oaths 156 n. 41
and 'proper respect for gods' 157–8
and 'religious correctness' 150–1, 158, 202
and Zeus Xenios 157–8, 163–4, 194, 221 n. 49
Xenophanes 5
as agnostic 209 n. 3

Xenophanes (*cont.*)
criticisms of gods 17
on divination 110–11, 124, 230
and 'lack of respect' 159 n. 55
on prayer 50, 53

Zeno 5
on celestial bodies 22 n. 75, 234, 236
on celestial phenomena 234
on *daimones* 26
on dedications 96 n. 131, 98, 101, 134
on divination 110–11
on eating the dead 150 n. 25
on *eudaimonia* 8
gods of 165 n. 68
and Hesiod 165 n. 68
on honouring the gods 164–5, 211, 236
on temples 134
Zeus 21 n. 70, 34 n. 13, 46 n. 12, 49, 59, 69–70, 81, 181, 221
of Atlantis 226–7
Bion on 46 n. 12, 177 n. 94
of Chrysippus 203–4
of Cleanthes 50, 219
and divination 57, 111, 127, 132, 138, 195, 224, 227–8
of Dodona 57, 127, 132, 138
and Epicurus 156 n. 44
of Euhemerus 232
Herkeios 221 n. 49
of Homer 2 n. 2, 17, 238
Homophylos 194, 221 n. 49
Horios 194, 221 n. 49
of Isthmia 87
and justice 205 n. 49, 226–7
and laws of Crete 136, 195, 224, 227–8
Lykaios 75
of Magnesia 108 n. 179, 157–8, 163, 194, 221–2, 246, 247 n. 14
of Nemea 87
of Olympia 87
Patroös 221 n. 49
Phratrios 221 n. 49
Poliouchos 163, 221–2
and Pythagoras 111
of Stagira 101
Xenios 157–8, 163–4, 194, 221 n. 49